This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

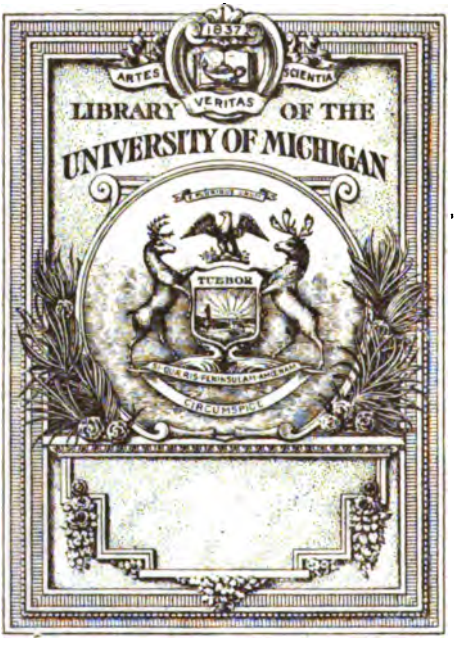
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

KBINDERS & STATIONERS,
3 WESTERN ROAD BRIGHTON.



AP
4
.M84

THE

MONTHLY PACKET

HALF-YEARLY VOLUME

EDITED BY CHRISTABEL R. COLERIDGE

AND

ARTHUR INNES.

NEW SERIES.—XV.

VOLUME XCV.

PARTS DLXIII. TO DLXVIII., JAN.—JUNE, 1898.

LONDON:

A. D. INNES AND COMPANY, LIMITED.

1898.

PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED,
LONDON AND BECCLES.

INDEX.

PAGE

Achill and the Claddagh. By Janet Sinclair Berger 656

Calculations of Budh Singh, The. By Helen Boulnois 45
Cameo: The Eighties. By C. M. Yonge 181
Canary Islands, The. By Clifford Hay 51
China Cupboard, The 109, 229, 349, 469, 589, 705
Counting, The. By Ella N. Lefroy 279

Eccentric Lady Winster, The. By E. D'Esterre-Keeling 171
Elder Tree, The. By Rev. H. Milnes 567
Elementary School Teaching as a Profession. By Louise F. Field . 440
Enchanted Forest of Witch Elms, The. By the Hon. Mrs. Maitland 554, 663

From my Attic Window. By Annie Groser Hurd 99, 219, 343, 464, 583, 695

Golden Barrows. By Frances E. Crompton 155
Gospel Writ in Steel, The. By Arthur Paterson . 1, 121, 241, 361, 481, 601

Happy Marriage in Troubled Times, A. By Annie Armitt . . . 546
'Heir of Redclyffe, The,' The Author of. By C. R. Coleridge . . 504

Main Chance, The. By C. R. Coleridge . . 68, 189, 306, 447, 572, 681

Off the High Road. By E. C. Price 395, 520, 631
Ourselves as Betters. By G. M. Ireland Blackburne 57
Philosophic Mind, A. By M. Smith 290
'Pilgrim's Progress, The.' By P. E. G. Girdlestone 419

Poetry:—
Carol of the Sheep, The. By E. M. D. 43
In the Silence. By H. M. Foster 662
Linnet's Song, A. By A. L. Knowles 674
Sunrise. By Olive Walford 297
Witch-Hare, The. By Maidie Dickson 179

301070

PAGE

Prisoner in Japan, A. By S. Ballard 298

Seen through a Microscope. By Edith Pollock 285
'Set a Thief——' 430
Sikhs, The. By A. D. Innes 35
Sir Charles Grandison. By K. L. Montgomery 164
Spiders. By Rev. H. Milnes 675

Through Pink Glasses. By E. H. Lacon Watson . 105, 225, 339, 460, 701

Women's Public Work. By Evelyn March-Phillipps :—
I.—Poor-Law Guardians 23
II.—Poor-Law Children 144
III.—Inspectors 266
IV.—School Boards and Parish Councils 385
V.—The Question of the Suffrage 509
VI.—Should Women study Public Questions? 622

THE MONTHLY PACKET.
NEW SERIES.

JANUARY, 1898.

THE GOSPEL WRIT IN STEEL.

BY ARTHUR PATERSON, AUTHOR OF 'FATHER AND SON,' 'FOR FREEDOM'S SAKE,' ETC.

CHAPTER I.

SATURDAY, April 13th, 1861. The day the Federal flag was hauled down at Fort Sumter under the fire of secession guns: when the citizens of the Northern States of America—Whig, Democrat, Republican—roused to a frenzy of excitement by those guns, called, with one voice, for arms: the day the embers of distrust and misunderstanding between the North and South, which had been smouldering for half a century, burst into flames—the day the war began.

In no part of the North was there greater enthusiasm than in the State of Wisconsin. New Yorkers and Bostonians looked upon Wisconsin as a place on the borders of nowhere; a semi-barbarous land, where the bowie-knife and revolver settled all disputes, where youths grew beards at twenty, and maidens learnt to use a rifle in their teens. Nothing could be further from the truth. Frontier simplicity there was in plenty, but rowdyism and lawlessness did not exist. Yet a Washington man would have thought the place archaic. In Chippewa, Northern Wisconsin, a town of great importance to its inhabitants and of no mean reputation elsewhere, politicians, when free from congress or senate, drove the plough on the farm, or served behind the counter in the store, and not one would have had a chance of re-election had he shown the least disposition

to shirk manual labour for the pleasanter, if somewhat crooked, paths of party wire-pulling. In Wisconsin, in 1861, the lowliest of labourers addressed his richest neighbour by his Christian name, and democracy in practice as in principle was the watch-word of public and private life. It was true that cultivation of mind and outward refinement both of manner and speech had yet to appear in the land—Wisconsin men and women had been too busy for such luxuries hitherto—but education was recognised as a prime necessity, and in Chippewa a good school had been established out of the public funds.

The staple industry around and about Chippewa and throughout the larger portion of the State was farming, and very substantial places many of these farms were. The soil was good; the people, thrifty men and strong—sons and grandsons of hardy frontiersmen and pioneers—were doing well.

In the sitting-room of one of these homesteads, on the evening of April 13th, an old lady was wandering restlessly to and fro between the window and the fire, over which, on a carved mantle-piece, she had placed a letter. A little bent old lady, slight and frail, with pale and sickly face, yet with keen bright eyes, firm chin, and mobile lips, in all of which lay a force and vitality which belied her feebleness of body. This evening, as the shadows lengthened and rays of light striking through the window panes, like long red fingers, showed that the sun was near its setting, Mrs. Burletson's face expressed more than its usual strength of purpose, and Maria, the help of the house, entering at this moment to lay the supper, decided to keep within her own breast certain troubles that weighed heavily upon her tongue.

'John is late, mem, I'm thinking.'

'You are wrong, 'Ria. It wants two minutes to the hour. Yet he will be late, likely. No man can think of bits of time when lambs are coming.'

But Marie heard her sigh, and, being a sympathetic soul, began to grumble—

'I know what is in your mind—that letter. Good sakes, why didn't you let me run with it when it came an hour ago? I will go now.'

'You will go on with your work. I do not wish John should see it till he comes in. Nothing puts him about so much as being fussed in work hours.'

'Your fretting will wear him more than all—you know it will.'

'I know my own mind, 'Ria. Have you finished laying table?'

'I guess so.'

'Then your eyes are asleep, my girl. No spoon for the mustard, no fork for John, a little knife for the meat. Maria, there are some people who will never get through life until they quit minding other folk's business. There—I knew he'd not be late. Dish up smartly, girl. John is coming now.'

A man was walking quickly towards the house, the after glow of the sunset playing upon his worn work-a-day clothes and old slouch hat, and glorifying the outlines of his plain, hard-featured face. John Burletson was five and twenty years old, but looked thirty. Unlike his mother, his prevailing expression was gentleness and good temper. His eyes were mild and pleasant, his mouth thoughtful and firm. In outline, the face was square and strongly made, but it lacked the vivacity and quick changes which were so characteristic of Mrs. Burletson. An awkward young man, with arms inclined to be too long, and round shoulders, broad out of proportion to his height, large hands and feet, a man who walked with the careless gait of one accustomed to tramp over ploughed fields, and who rarely troubled himself concerning his carriage or dress.

'I'm behind, mother.'

They met at the kitchen door.

'Just one minute, my son, if 'Ria's time is true.'

'I am sorry,' he said smiling; ''twas the old ewe; as usual, she reckoned to see Jim and me whipped before she'd get under cover; it came to carrying her at last.'

He sat down on a chair near the door, and stooped to unlace his boots.

'Don't do that yet, sonny. Here's a letter from Luke.'

He looked up, and she saw an eager light in his eyes, but he did not take the note.

'I'll see to it presently.'

'I have a notion you are wanted in town—at once.'

He had pulled off one boot by this time, and now began upon the other.

'That may be, but this mud won't agree with 'Ria's clean boards or your carpet. Keep the letter for me till I'm clean. I will be round in two winks.'

He marched off to his bedroom in his stockings, returning clad in a better coat. It was a habit of John Burletson's never

to sit down with his mother to the evening meal in his working clothes.

'Now let me see the news.' As he took the letter from her he kissed her on the cheek, and found it wet with tears. Then he read the note, and Mrs. Burletson heard him draw a short sharp breath.

'It has come at last. Sumter's taken. War is declared.'

'They want you, John?'

But he did not answer her.

'How smart and deep the Southerners have played their game. No noise, no dust. They seceded, crying "Let us go in peace,' and then, while we, trusting to that, stand open-mouthed wondering, doing nothing, guarding nothing, they step right in and strike; tear down the flag, take our strongest fort. President Buchanan will have a heavy day of reckoning, if we ever make him pay his dues.

'Does Luke ask your counsel?'

Her mind took in little of the question in its general bearing. She was only thinking of him. Her words brought John back with a start.

'Well—I guess he wants to talk. Every one talks these days. What we need is a President and Government who'll act. This new man, Abraham Lincoln, is our only hope. If he don't go forward now, the whole nation will break up into bits.'

'That is what the seceshers want, John?'

She was falling into his mood; but her eyes were watching his face anxiously, and he knew it, though he did not look at her, and was not thinking of himself.

'They will stand a rare chance, mother, of getting all they wish if Lincoln does not bite back quickly and hard.'

'But the North is a wide place to conquer, son.'

'Washington is on the Potomac River. If Virginia secedes, and I think she will now, spite of all they say, the seceshers will only be one day's march from our capital. Supposing them to be smart—and Virginians will make some of the best fighting-men in America. I would not be surprised to hear next that the Government, President Lincoln, and all, were in their hands. Where would we be then? I will show you how this idea comes to me.'

He went to a writing-desk in an adjoining room, took out a roll of maps from a pigeon-hole, and spread one out upon the table where the supper was fast growing cold.

'Look, mother, I drew this map of the border a week since. It is very badly done, but it is correct so far. See that black spot. That is Richmond, Virginia's capital; and here is Harper's Ferry, where the great arsenal lies with stores of ammunition and weapons for two armies like enough, and all on Southern ground. I take it the secession folk will jump the place—or have done before this. From there they will march north, well-equipped, across the Potomac, before Long Bridge is fortified, and on to Washington. There is nothing to stop them, unless the Government is awake, and after what we have seen so far under Buchanan, things are not hopeful. What do you say?'

Mrs. Burleston laughed softly, and patted her son's broad shoulder.

'I say if this man here was secesh, I would be sorry for the North, but as he is not, spite of the arms and President Buchanan and all, I do not fear for the Union while it has such men as you. Though how you get to know what you do, John, is wonderful to me. There—I said it before.'

John rolled up his map.

'It is easy to get books and read them. But I am keeping supper standing. Mother, you should check me when I forget you so.'

'It takes me all my time to make you think of aught else, my dear. You will now be off to Luke. He expects you to supper.'

John sat down, and sharpened the carving-knife.

'It is not likely that you are going to eat alone. What is this? Beef. 'Ria has cooked it well to-night. You must have a slice.'

'I could not eat meat this time of day.'

'You had none at noon, and the doctor said nourishment was what you needed. Try it, mother, or I will leave mine alone, and I want my steak bad.'

She laughed and yielded, and for a few minutes they eat silently, John absent and thoughtful, his mother watching him.

'John,' she said suddenly, 'what will folk do about this?'

'Volunteer—I should guess. The militia will be called out, but that will not be enough—not near enough.'

He frowned as he spoke, and his mother's lips tightened as if in pain.

'You mean that men—men working in farms and elsewhere—would 'list and serve in the army. Aye, they will do so, the

brave ones. And it is right'—her voice deepened in tone and strength—'the men who hesitated for the sake of those they would leave, when the country needed they should go, would be cowards, and none of their friends would hold them back. I hope that all the boys will volunteer round here.'

'You may depend on that,' he said, thrusting his plate from him, though it was still half full, and rising from the table. 'I guarantee half the town will be at Luke's when I get down. You will not wait for me, mother. Promise me that. I do not know—I can't rightly tell—when I may be back. And it would worry me so to feel you were breaking your rest. Promise you'll not sit up past ten o'clock.'

'I promise to go to bed, John, when I feel like it. I will not stay up a moment after that. I cannot say fairer, dear. Mebbe you will not get home at all to-night. Why should you? Yet, if it could be so fixed, will you come? Of course they will want you there, your place is not at home these times. To-morrow I hope you will be on the way to Washington. But, to-night—well, never mind.'

Her voice broke at the last, and she paused to steady it. The absent look left John's face in an instant, and he took her in his arms.

'Mother, what is to do with you? I do believe you think they'll give me command of a regiment at least. Bless you, they will not want such as me, except to carry a musket when the time comes. There are more of my kind, and better, in the North than blackberries on a hedge. If I go—and I have not thought of that yet—it will be as a private, when I have learnt to shoot. Pshaw! what is in your brain, mumsey mine? Come—come.'

He kissed her very tenderly, and the tears that were gathering slowly in her eyes did not fall. She raised her head with a proud smile.

'My brain is old, sonny, and I am nigh worn out. But I am sharp enough yet to tell what lies in you. Go to the war that is coming how you will, before it ends, if it don't fizzle out in a month or two, you will be taking a share you little think now. Look what our new President was at your age. Look what he is now. The future is yours, and though I will never see it, my son will make his mark upon it all. You need the opportunity, John, to be forced upon you. You are slow to move when it is to your own advantage. Too slow, which is one of your faults. But I believe the time has come when you must show to others the

worth that your old mother knows. Now be off with you to Luke's ; don't stay kissin' me.'

She gave him a gentle push, then solemnly blessed him. As he reached the door, she cried out—

'Mind you give Jean my love, and tell her to look up to see me early to-morrow. There will be a deal to talk about, I fancy, and she can tell me all the news.'

John promised, and Mrs. Burleston was alone. She went to the window and looked out. It was a dark night, but she listened, and presently heard the beat of horse's hoofs upon the road.

'He is loping,' she muttered to herself. 'Loping hard to the war. And he will be the first in the fight, will John. They will make him a captain, and it is those who lead who are killed. Merciful Lord!'

She shuddered, and shut the window.

'How many are saying the same to-night. Mothers, sisters, wives. I may not complain. But it is hard. All his life I have shared his troubles, and given him what I had ; and every year he has grown more precious, being a lad as he is. And now when I am old, God sends him away to this war, and I will die and never see him again.'

The door opened behind her, and Maria came with the tray to clear away the things.

''Ria,' cried Mrs. Burletson, severely, 'you've been crying.'

Maria sniffed and tried to answer, then broke down altogether and sobbed aloud.

'I can't hold it in any longer. It's that Jim Hallet of mine, and what he's gone and done. We was to have been married come June—you know it—and now this very day he's off to town in his best cloes, to volunteer for the war. I wouldn't mind that with some men, but Jim's bound to get shot—jest bound to, he's so big. Let alone he's being too tender-hearted to shoot at any human critter. Oh, mem, the men has gone mad, I do believe, an' all for nothing at all. But there, when it's a fight we women may go and take a back seat for ever, an' stay there.'

Maria, being very breathless, stopped at this point, and expected a severe reprimand, for she knew that her mistress hated display of emotion. To the girl's astonishment, Mrs. Burleston wiped her own eyes and kissed her.

'My dear, go, clear these dishes away, then bring your work and sit in this room with me. You are not the only woman, 'Ria, by many, young and old, to curse the war to-night.'

CHAPTER II.

CHIPPEWA TOWN was full to overflowing when John Burletson rode in at nine o'clock. Men and women walked to and fro in restless excitement, or stood about in groups listening to some eager talker who thought he had important news to tell. Scraps of startling intelligence caught John's ears as he steered his impatient horse among the crowd, and many of the people hailed him by name, and called upon him to stop. But he said he had not time, and pressed on at the best speed he might into the centre of the town, where stood Luke Selby's store, the largest building in the place.

In country towns in the western states it is to the store—when the store-keeper knows his business—that every one goes for reliable news during crises in public affairs. There will be found the best minds and the shrewdest heads in the district. In Chippewa this was more the case than elsewhere, for Luke Selby knew his business well, and no town meeting, religious, social, or political, was complete without his presence, generally as chairman. All news, from the birth of the Senator's last baby to a telegram from Washington, reached Luke before it came to any other man. No action affecting the interests of Chippewa was ever taken without a word, or many words, from him. To-night his store was lighted up and crammed from end to end with a seething mass of men. No goods were to be seen. Every barrel and keg and box formed the seat of one or more persons. There was not standing room for a fly upon his counters; and the body of the store, cleared of all goods, was black with people, who clustered like a swarm of disturbed bees upon the platform outside, and overflowed into the street itself. Everywhere arose the noise and confusion of tongues, for an American crowd—until the speech-making begins—is the least silent of human congregations; and all talked at once, discussing, haranguing, prophesying, arguing. John, after hitching his horse to a post behind the store, wondered as he began to make his way slowly up the platform steps, whether he would ever get to Luke at all. But no sooner was his face seen by the crowd than his name was passed from lip to lip, speedily reaching the store-keeper's ears at the other end of the room. Luke Selby was seated at a table on a small raised platform. He was in his shirt-sleeves, writing down a list of names upon a sheet of

paper. When he heard of John's arrival he threw down his pen with a muttered 'At last,' stepped to the edge of the platform, and shouted with a voice that resounded above all the babel of tongues.

'John—John Burleston, come up here! Make room for him, good folk, make room! You boys of the army, straighten out! 'Tention: eyes right: dress: sa-lute!' the words—spoken on the spur of the moment—coming with the full force of his lungs. He was answered by a cheer, and then, with one of those common impulses which seize a crowd at such times, every man stepped closer to his neighbour, a narrow lane was made from the door to the platform, and John, to his unspeakable astonishment, found himself walking past neighbours and friends as if he were a public character. Luke wrung him by the hand and pulled him on to the platform, while the crowd fell silent, expecting a speech.

'Welcome, dear friend, right welcome!' cried the store-keeper, in a loud voice. 'I have to inform you, John, that you have been elected to the command of the first company of the Chippewa volunteers. Soldiers,'—turning to the crowd—'give Captain John P. Burletson three big thunderin' cheers.'

He slapped John on the shoulder, and then led the shouts which followed.

John stood dazed and bewildered. When the cheering was over, and the crowd began to talk again, he roused himself.

'Now, tell me what this means.'

'You saw my letter?'

'Well?'

'Read this.'

It was a telegram from the governor of Wisconsin.

'President has called out militia, seventy-five thousand. Will Chippewa boys volunteer? Organise and report numbers without delay.'

Luke watched John keenly, and smiled as he saw the round shoulders straighten and the strong face flush.

'Lincoln's awake, then?'

'Seems so; and you were right—we just as wrong. I don't forget that now.'

He referred to arguments in the past, when John, who had prophesied war, had stood alone against all his friends.

'How do the Democrats shape?'

'On our side, every one. Even old Enos Haines, who has

three brothers down South, is tearing mad to fight. There are no Democrats here. We're all Union men. Let me tell you, boy, this is going to be the biggest fighting boom around the North the world has ever seen. We will make the skies crack presently if secession don't climb down. We mean business. No flather or froth about us. Now come inside and see the folk, then step back here with me and give the boys your mind upon this thing.'

He descended two steps, opened a door and pushing John in before him, shut the door again, and the strident babel of excited voices sank to a distant hum.

The room they were in was small and bare, littered with bills and invoices, packets of paper, pens and ink, and blotting pads, The furniture was a table, a safe, a rusty stove, and some wooden chairs, now occupied by ladies, the wives of Chippewa's principal citizens. There was a lamp on the table, by the light of which a girl had been reading aloud from a newspaper. She was now talking in quick, excited tones, so intent upon her subject that she did not notice at first the entrance of the men.

'Oh, it was just heroic,' she was saying, 'holding that fort so many hours, without a chance of victory. Those soldiers are men indeed. It may seem cruel to say so, but I do believe we want a war. Our men grub all their days for dollars—dollars—dollars. Justice and freedom and right they don't count worth a cent. It is always "We must not do this, or say that, for fear the South might take offence, and ruin trade;" or "Slavery may be a disgrace, but to interfere with it won't pay;" and so on, and so on, until I have felt just sick with the shame of it all. Why, father, is that you? Good evening, John. Father, tell me what that cheering meant. Is there more news?'

'It was our boys greeting their captain, here. He is wishful for your congratulations.'

He laughed cheerfully. John did not laugh.

'If this is some joke you are playing upon me, Luke, I guess it is rather a tough one.'

'Joke? Wait till you hear me call the roll of names before I wire to Washington. Joke? I tell ye, friend, I have had no supper—no, not a bite or sup since lunch. All afternoon the boys have been piling in to have their names put down. We had a full company by six o'clock, and then I stopped them, and made them elect officers. You came first. Seth Cotton was mentioned, and he'll be your lieutenant; but you were

ahead by a mile. Naturally too; every one knows, now, about your maps and military books, and how well you have studied out this thing, while the rest of us stood and talked. I am pleased, real pleased it should be so. 'Tain't every man, friend, who can win the votes of our Wisconsin boys.'

'And I am delighted, John. It is magnificent. I can hardly believe it to be true yet. But I know it is just right.'

Jean Selby impulsively held out her hand to him; a small, slight hand, quite hidden from view when John's fingers closed upon it—hungrily, eagerly.

'I do not know what to say at all,' he rejoined. 'As for making a speech, I could not if I were to be shot for refusing. I never dreamt of this, and will have to think out a power of things before I get my mind quite straight. It seems to me, you know,' he added slowly, looking round at them with a quaint, dry smile, 'as if the news to-day had got into the heads of some of you until small men like me look twice their natural size.'

Luke Selby laughed again, impatiently.

'Have done, man, have done! We know you, John, better than you know yourself. There is a deep, 'cute brain laying away down in your thick head. We know that of all men hereabouts you will be the first to give your best to the country and its cause. 'Tis hard on the old lady to lose ye, but she'll be prouder than a queen when she hears that you've been chosen by the boys. Now we must get back, I hear stampin'. The folk are impatient. Hello! here's Seth to tell us.'

The door had opened smartly, and a young man came in, flushed and breathless. He was taller than John, of neat and shapely figure, dressed in dark clothes of city cut; a graceful, handsome fellow; his face full of spirit, with expressive brown eyes and delicate features. He spoke to Luke, but his eyes sought Jean's face and rested there.

'You must come, sir; the boys are calling for you, and some are asking if John has run away. I promised to take him to them, dead or alive. How do you find yourself, captain?'

'Very weak in the works, Seth. You must speak for both of us.'

'Pshaw! My turn don't come till after yours. You rank me here, man, every time.'

He laughed, but spoke with a bitter meaning, and his eyes swept from Jean's flushed face to John's pale one with quick inquiry and ill-suppressed chagrin.

'Come out, Johnny,' cried Luke, thrusting a compelling hand through John's arm, and pressing towards the door. 'You must go through this business. Do it your own way, but do it. Come.'

John, cornered thus, yielded with a sigh, while the others followed, Seth at Jean's side.

They made a handsome pair, as more than one of the ladies behind remarked. Jean was a stately maiden, nearly as tall as her companion. Her face, serious in repose, too serious for a girl of twenty, looked its best to-night: a sweet and earnest face with deep blue eyes, a marvellous complexion, and a crown of abundant golden hair.

A yell of applause greeted the little party as it appeared on the platform, dropping quickly to silence as Luke held up his hand.

'Gentlemen of the army of the Union, John Burletson, whom you have honoured by electing your captain, is going to speak to you. He didn't want to, but I have brought him here because I knew you wished to hear him. Was I right?'

A shout that shook the roof; and a chorus of 'ayes,' amid which Luke moved to one side, leaving John in his place.

The contrast between the men was a striking one, and the audience, quick to notice such things, saw it at once and laughed. Luke Selby was a man of presence, six feet high and broad in proportion, with confident commanding manner and a deep rich voice. It was said that his ready smile and laugh were too frequently indulged in; that his eyes were frosty and calculating; his speech hot or cold, according to the temperament of those he addressed; in short, that he handled men as he handled goods—for profit. But whatever men hinted in private, in public affairs every one acknowledged Luke Selby's authority, and as a platform orator he stood supreme. John, standing beside him, looked the embodiment of awkward diffidence. His large head was thrust forward between his clumsy shoulders as he nervously clasped and unclasped his hands behind his back, trying to collect his wits, which were scattered to the four winds by the consciousness that he had never made a speech before in public, and that he was placed in his present position by a man whose motives he thoroughly distrusted. There was, however, one saving clause to all this—John was in earnest, no man in all that enthusiastic crowd more so, and before the people had fairly settled down to listen the words came to him that he wished to say.

'Friends, I do not know one bit what I am put up here to tell you. Luke has said I do not speak by choice, and it might have been better if he had written down something for me to say; but he has not, and I reckon, anyway, that both you and he will have to be content with what ideas come from my own mind' ('hear, hear,' from Luke, in sonorous tones). 'Now, I am not going to say much,' John went on, straightening himself unconsciously, as his nervousness evaporated, 'in my way of looking at this thing the less we talk the better. Let us keep our breath, now that war is really coming, for the fighting.' (Loud cheers.) 'This war, friends, in my idea, ain't going to be any playing game. 'Twill mean death, and ruin, and misery untold to thousands and hundreds of thousands. For I tell you it will not be finished up this month, nor this year, unless the folk down South have changed a powerful deal since they followed George Washington in the War of Independence, and whipped the British army into bits.'

A growl of dissent here from many throats, and a voice shouted—

'How about Boston tea? It was New England men, not Southerners, who ran that war.'

'Was it?' said John, slowly, raising his voice and looking the crowd squarely in the face. 'I guess not. They helped; but if you read history you will find that Washington himself came from Virginia, and that he was not the only one.'

'Virginia ain't seceded,' cried an elderly man, with slow scorn.

'Not yet, but she will. And if she did not, there is as good fighting stuff in the Carolinas as elsewhere. Now, I am not afraid of this.' ('Glad you ain't,' drawled the last speaker.) 'I hope no Union man will be. But we must reckon the cost, and it comes home to me, hearing that in this town more than one hundred boys have elected since noon to leave their homes, and march south to the war, that this part of the picture has been kind of painted out. Don't forget, friends,'—his tone became very earnest now—'what such fighting means. It is their country you will fight in, not your own. Every man, woman, and child you meet will be on their side, and against you. We are bound to whip them in the end, but it won't be done at once—I know it won't. As to myself, Luke says—and what Luke says, he knows—that you who have sworn to follow the flag, have taken and made me your captain. What shall I say? What

can I say but that I thank you heartily? I was the most surprised man in Chippewa when I heard the news, and the most ashamed. For, friends, boys, I am not worth it. I ain't indeed.' The speaker's voice became a trifle husky now, and the cheers broke out anew. 'Yet to say I do not feel lifted right up, until I am nigh as tall as Luke himself, would be to tell a lie. I am honoured, indeed. But mind this, I will not say that I accept the post until I have had time to think a bit. I can't think now, for it has come too suddenly. To-morrow I shall know what I can do. Thank you, though, every one.'

He stepped back, and the people, after one moment of hesitation, stamped and cheered, then cried for 'Lieutenant Cotton,' and Seth came forward with a bow.

Seth Cotton was the schoolmaster of Chippewa. He was a good and fluent speaker, and an ardent abolitionist; moreover, he was in love, and in the presence of his love, a combination of circumstances which with a vivid imagination and a sanguine nature caused him to speak now as he had never spoken in his life before, and in all probability never would again.

He began by a few words in the best taste about John Burletson, 'a true friend, because a candid one. So honest and so strong, that even the force of this tremendous time does not move him one inch beyond his sober base of thought and conviction. What he thinks he says unflinchingly, all honour to him.' Then, taking John's words about the Southerners as his text, the speaker in impassioned language denounced 'those degenerate, profligate descendants of our great Father George.' He called them 'rebels and renegades'; he painted the horrors of the slavery they upheld in lurid colours—he had never seen a Southerner, and never spoken to a negro, but he knew 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' by heart. He besought his hearers to cast aside all ties of love, and home, and worldly gain, and, one and all, to enlist for the war. He modestly asserted his right to say as much, having, himself, been the first to place his name on the list of volunteers; and he concluded by asking Luke to read aloud the names of those 'pledged to stand by their country in this, its hour of peril.'

As might be expected, in the present state of the public temperature, such a speech as this stirred the hearts of men to their depths. It was many minutes before Luke was able to command silence, and in deep ringing tones read out the names. The most moved of all was Jean. Never had Seth

Cotton done his own particular cause, which had, on the whole, been rather a losing one, so much good as by his speech that night. The sentiments he expressed so well were the very breath of Jean's life just now. She was of eager temperament, and the tune was full of an electricity which fired the blood of the coldest. Tears started to her eyes as she heard his words, and she applauded them until her hands ached. Now, as the names were read, a passionate desire came to do something—ever so little—herself, and before long an idea struck her, caused by a sharp cry of 'Old John Brown—God bless him,' when that famous name, which belonged in this instance to a youth of eighteen summers, was read out. When Luke's task was done, and the cheers had died away, and there was a movement towards the door, the girl moved by a sudden impulse stepped forward to the edge of the platform and began to sing. It was a song familiar already at Abolitionist meetings, but now to become before all others the national air in the North; and the people in their excitement listened spellbound, with husky, laboured breath.

'John Brown's body is lying in the ground,
But his soul goes marching on.'

And when she paused at the end of the verse, and blushing at her own boldness, cried 'the chorus please,' not a voice in the store was silent. Every man and every woman, those with strong voices, and those with no voices at all, joined in with might and main, and sang from the bottom of their hearts—

'Glory, glory, hallelujah. Glory, glory, hallelujah,
His soul goes marching on.'

CHAPTER III.

IT was midnight before John left Chippewa. The crowd dispersed after 'John Brown' was sung, but Luke invited him to share a late supper; Jean's eyes seconded the invitation, and though he was haunted by a fear lest his mother might, after all, be sitting up for him, he could not resist, and once in Selby's comfortable parlour, he found it hard to leave.

The party consisted of John and Seth, Luke and his daughter, and Mrs. Selby, whose name we place last as she was considered by every one except John to be the least important person there. Mrs. Selby was a stout, 'homely' woman of fifty. Her

principal characteristics, as known to her family, were placid good temper, and a profound respect for her husband and eldest daughter, which took the form of absolute submission to the former, and indulgence, where practicable, of every whim of the latter. The satisfaction, however, that such irreproachable conduct gave to Jean was tempered by the difficulty of awakening the least interest in her mother concerning any matter which did not pertain to babies and the household. No exhortation, however eloquent and convincing, could rouse Mrs. Selby into enthusiasm for the public rights and duties of women, or the freedom of the slaves. She would listen patiently, and try with all her might to grasp their importance, but she invariably failed.

'Jennie talked about the niggers last night,' she said once to a friend, 'until, if you will believe me, my dear, my brains became that addled I could not tell batter from mush. I did not stop her, 'cos it is so uplifting, as you may say, to feel she should be so smart, and re'elly her words was sometimes like organ-music, they was so fine-sounding. But, lor', how my pore head did ache! I do hope she will not often be took that way when we are alone.'

This speech was repeated, with picturesque additions, to Jean, and did more harm to the fast-vanishing deference she still strove to feel towards her mother, than half a dozen quarrels. Yet, in her way, Mrs. Selby was shrewd and full of knowledge. Her skill in cooking amounted almost to genius, and a better-kept and ordered household than Luke's did not exist in Wisconsin. When the poor folk of Chippewa fell sick it was to 'Mother Selby' that they came for advice, and the doctor of the town, a skilful practitioner, seldom found fault with her remedies, and said she was the best nurse he knew. John, through his mother, was aware of these things, and it was a constant pain to him to see the impatience with which Jean would often treat her mother, and he would resolve to speak his mind on the subject; but with a dislike to interfering, and a passivity characteristic of him, he never did, though they had known one another since babyhood. To-night his thoughts were too full of other things, and under the spell of those glorious blue eyes he talked and argued with the rest, and noticed no more than Seth—who had never thought about it at all—that all the work of cooking and dishing up the supper, the clearing away, and the washing of things, was done by the

mistress of the house, her daughter sitting with the gentlemen, her hands idle before her. Jean, herself, thought of it as little as they. Her mind was full of the great crisis. She listened with breathless interest to John, as he expressed his fears about the safety of the capital, and she took his part valiantly when her father and Seth pooh-poohed the danger, and prophesied the paralyzation of the Seceders when they should hear of the storm their action had aroused throughout the North. As for Mrs. Selby, she listened too, and tried to understand, pricking herself to the bone in her efforts to keep awake over her work—a new skirt for Jean—but at last had to give it up and steal away to bed unnoticed and unmissed.

At length, when the lamps showed a disposition to smell unpleasantly preparatory to going out altogether, and Luke himself had given more than one portentous yawn, the young men remembered the flight of time, and took their leave. Jean shook hands with each, very cordially; but Seth noticed with a jealous pang that her fingers rested in Burletson's hand longer than in his, and that her voice was tremulous in its earnestness as she said—

'Do you know, John, you have not put your name down on father's list?'

'That is so.'

'But why?'

'I made up my mind when first the idea that there was to be war came to me, that I would never promise to go without hearing what mother had to say. To-morrow morning I will run down here to tell your father what I'll do—and you.'

Was there a slight emphasis on the last word, though it was spoken in a lower tone? Seth thought there was, and was certain that Jean did, and that there was a deeper colour in her cheeks, a suspicious brightness in her eyes when John mounted and rode away.

As for John, he galloped merrily home, humming 'John Brown's body,' and making plans all the way. He had means enough laid by to give his company the best rifles money could buy. The problem was the management of the farm in his absence. But in this matter his mother's convenience and comfort was too deeply involved for any plan to be seriously thought out until she had been consulted. He stabled his horse, and stole softly to the back of the house, for Mrs. Burletson was a very light sleeper. He took off his boots

before he opened the door, and crept in without a sound. When in the hall he saw a shaft of light under the sitting-room door, and a low exclamation of annoyance and self-reproach escaped him. She must have waited for him after all. He opened the door, and for a moment his heart stood still. Mrs. Burletson was sitting in her armchair, drawn close to the table. The big family bible lay open before her near a lighted lamp. But she was not reading, her eyes were closed, and she was leaning back with folded hands, looking so white and haggard, that a horrible dread seized John. He laid a finger on her wrist, and to his intense relief she opened her eyes and smiled.

'Is it you, John? I have been dosing. My eyes soon get tired of reading these days, and to rest them I sat awhile to think and so went off. But sonny, you look scared. Is anything wrong?'

'Nothing—except that I am upset to see you here. You promised you would not sit up.'

'If I did not feel like it. That was the contract, son. Well, I did—so I kept here. What is the time?'

'Nigh one o'clock.'

'So late? Then you must to your rest, and tell me all to-morrow. Only one thing now. Have they given you a command?'

'They—talk of it.'

'Ah, what did I say?' And her eyes, strangely heavy and weary, he thought, flashed with their old light. 'After all, though I never hold much in common with the folk round here, I will believe, now, that they are intelligent at least. Good-night, dear. The old mother was right, you see.'

She kissed him, and would have risen, but he put his arm about her, laying his cheek against hers as he used to do as a child when he had to make a confession of some fault. The significance of the movement struck Mrs. Burletson.

'What's to do, John?'

'Mother, it was real mean to leave you for so long alone. I cannot think how I came to forget you.'

'My dear, you were needed by others. I must be your last thought now. Time was when the calls for you outside the farm were for pleasure-making. Then you never left me. It is different now. Folk talk of daughters. I have seen many, and I know one. I never heard of any that came near my son for tenderness and care. But, John, this has ended. I have told

myself this evening, and schooled even my selfish heart—and I am selfish, aye, grasping and miserly about you—I have looked into the future until I see it all clear and straight. When you go'—she stopped, then set her lips into their firmest line—'when you go to the war, John, you will leave behind a contented old mother, who is thankful that God has spared her to see the son she has brought up be the strength and support to his country that he has been all his life to her. There can't be a higher duty for a man, or a greater work.'

'You don't speak of yourself, mother.'

She laughed.

'I? Am I not doing my little bit for the great Union cause? I have one thing to give—you. I give it willingly. I would tell you to go, if you needed telling. You may be killed, or maimed for life, or laid aside with chills in that low-lying, unhealthy South. But you must go, and I must stay at home and wait, with all the rest of the women folk. And now, to bed, my dear, to bed. Thank God before you sleep, that in His sight we have the strength, spite of the love in our hearts, to do the right. It is hard on you, dear, harder than for me. I have only you to give—you have me and another. But it is right, and if we are Christians, John, that is all we need to know.'

She kissed him on the lips, and for a moment clung to him, then closed her bible and put it in its proper place, and passed on to her room. John followed her example, and was soon in bed, but not to sleep. Every nerve was tightly strung; his brain throbbed with conflicting thoughts. An hour ago he had ridden home in the moonlight, with his mind made up to go to the war. Now, he would do—what? His duty? He would try—but it was terribly hard. All through the silent hours that came before dawn, John thought and resolved—and then fought and wrestled with his resolutions until he tore them to pieces; only to begin again and resolve once more. John was not an impulsive man, nor was he quickly or easily impressed; but when once moved, once roused—as he had been this evening at the store—he found it harder than most men to pause and turn back. Yet his mother's face as she waited for him, so pallid and worn and old, her clinging hands about his neck, and most of all, the yearning and unconscious appeal in her eyes, in spite of her resolute purpose to efface herself, and urge him to leave her in her loneliness, held John fast, and to cherish her and let the war go by spelt 'duty' to him now. He was not long in

coming to that conclusion; but the night had passed, and the dawn was stealing in upon his chamber, and still he could not bring himself to face all that this involved. Again and again he would say to himself, 'The country can find a thousand better than me; my money will be useful, and the boys shall have all that; but as for myself—why, Seth is a smarter man, and a readier, let him take command, what odds?' but as often consequences grimly mocked his words as sophistry and worse. What odds, indeed? How should he meet Luke, or the boys who had chosen him, or worst of all, Jean? He writhed in his bed at the thought of her, and for the time his resolutions would give way. He knew Jean better, perhaps, than any one else had ever done; better than her mother, far better than her father, and the thought of what she would feel and say, was torture of the worst kind. Her nature was generous but self-willed, ambitious, and full of the wildest enthusiasm for the cause of the Union and the slaves. She would recoil at the idea of any man passively standing by for others to reap glory and renown. She would never understand his motive, even if she divined it, and for his mother's sake he must conceal it. If his mother knew that he had done this for her, she would be miserable for life, and Jean would never keep such a secret. The sacrifice was too great. He could not do it. Then he would turn over, close his eyes and try to sleep, soon to begin again the struggle with himself. But when the day dawned, he pulled himself together with stern self-reproach. He could not meet his mother with an uncertain mind. A decision, deliberate and final, must be come to now. Slowly and wearily he rose, and threw the window open wide. It faced east, and a pale yellow rim of broadening light crept from the horizon line, bringing day with it and action. The time for doubt was gone. When John had turned from the window he had left his uncertainties behind. He dropped on his knees and prayed earnestly, but it was for strength and faith—not guidance; that had been given.

It was Sunday, and as John went the round of his stables and tended his stock, the stillness and calm of the sabbath morning entered his heart, and for a time brought comfort to the wounds there, and strengthened nerve and mind for the ordeal that had to come. When breakfast-time came, and he met his mother's eyes, she only saw a slight pallor and heaviness in his face natural after the late hours and excitement of the night before.

Yet, whether from some warning instinct, or because she could not trust herself to speak freely about plans for his departure, Mrs. Burletson asked no questions about what had passed, and the meal was eaten almost in silence.

'What time do you start for town, John?'

'Directly we are through breakfast, mother. I will be back in time to take you to meeting—but I have to see Luke early.'

'I guessed that,' she said, with an attempt at a smile. 'Did you give Jean my message?'

'I forgot it, mother.'

'I am glad. Don't think me mean, son, but I want you to-day—all to myself—that is when you do come back.'

They had moved from the table, and now John came close to her.

'I have news to tell you which I've kept till now.'

'You should have news, son,' looking up at him with keen and questioning eyes. 'There was a great meeting, 'Ria said—Jim Hallett told her—and you made a speech. Come, tell me all.'

'Yes,' he answered, in a curious, low, strained tone. 'But there is not much to say. Luke asked me if I would volunteer; I said I would answer him to-day. I have thought a good bit over it, and what I will have to tell Luke, mother, is—is that the one thousand dollars I have laying at the bank shall go to the boys for arms. Do you approve?'

'I do, John. You have no present need of that money, and from you, as captain of the company, the gift comes well. Not many farmers will do so much.'

'I had meant first only to put down half the amount,' John said, his words coming more and more slowly, 'but I reckon now to give it all. I have decided to tell Luke to find another man for the command.'

'You mean you'll go as a private only—now why is that?'

'I mean, mother, that I am not going to the war at all.'

He spoke in a low tone; but his mother, searching his face with her eyes, thought she had never seen him look so stern. Then her own face hardened.

'John,' she cried, hoarsely, 'tell me the reason for such words.

'There is more than one.'

'Tell me the chief one. Now, do not fence. I will not have that. Is it *me?* Is it because you think I should be fretting about you? Is it that? Speak!'

Her tone was fierce, almost threatening, and she hoped to see him wince; but his face never moved a muscle; his eyes met hers without flinching; only, when he touched her forehead with a kiss, she felt that his lips were cold as ice.

'Mother, I cannot tell you what is on my mind. I will not. But—mother—do not think me cowardly or selfish. Have faith that I am trying to do my duty. Will you?'

There was a break in the firm voice now, a bitter cry in it that cut his mother to the heart.

'Why ask me that, John? I know that whatever it is it must be good—the best.'

He kissed her passionately.

'I knew you would say that, but I wanted to make sure. You see,' he tried to smile, 'there is no one else who will begin to believe in me now, or ever again.'

'Nonsense, there is Jean.'

He drew himself away, and shuddered.

'Jean! Jean—least of all.'

WOMEN'S PUBLIC WORK.

I.—POOR-LAW GUARDIANS.

THIS paper makes no claim to be an exhaustive study of the subject of which it treats, nor is it in any sense a handbook for those who intend to take up the work described; but, at the present time, a growing interest is felt in all the more scientific methods of work, even of charitable work, and those who have time to spare, and the necessary abilities, may feel drawn towards those channels which lead directly to the help of the destitute, and through which more intimate experience may be gained of the science of dealing with them than is, perhaps, obtainable in any other way. Again, there are many women who, without any intention of, or aptitude for, becoming guardians, possess a vote for the municipal elections, and would be glad to know something of the powers and responsibilities of the position; and there are few who take any interest in their poorer neighbours, who are not interested in its difficulties and opportunities. Those who feel that they may some day turn their thoughts to such work, may be helped by a sketch like this to decide whether to inquire more fully into details, and ultimately to proceed to serious study; and it may enable the amateur worker to follow local proceedings and cases coming under personal notice with a more understanding attention.

English local government is a wide and perplexing subject, but it is the great feature of English civil life. In countries of centralised government, such as Russia or France, every question has to be referred to a central authority, distant from the scene of action, and gathering its impressions from official communications. Between such a course and our own extreme lies every shade of procedure; but what makes our local government such a real thing, is the fact that the central government has no power to interfere when authority is once given, as long as the local government keeps within the law. Should it ever abuse the powers entrusted to it, it is long before the head department

can do more than criticise and censure. The only exception against local decisions is the right of appeal to a higher court in cases of importance; but the rule is generally observed, and gives great strength to all forms of local authority.

Central government as we understand it: the making of laws by a Ruler and Parliament, is a comparatively modern institution in our country, and only dates from the twelfth century; but we must go further, much further back, into the dim days of the Saxon kings, before Alfred reigned, a thousand years and more, to find the origin of our local government, and it is hard to understand much of our present machinery, unless we know something of the past. 'Draw but one thread in the web, and you can follow it back and back through the centuries, to the days when the loom stood bare to the workman's hand, till you seem almost to hear the grating of those keels on Ebbsfleet beach, from which our fathers sprang ashore to found the mightiest empire which the world has ever seen.'

The old Saxon title of townschippen has been exchanged for the ecclesiastical name of parish; the shire was transformed by the Normans into the county. The hundred, or Danish wapentake, an ancient tribal organisation, revived in the tenth century as a sort of police district, has drawn to itself a number of functions, and round it we may group the County Court, the Petty Sessions, Sanitary Districts, and that with which we are chiefly concerned here, the Poor-Law Union.

Later on arose the borough, or it would be more correct to say, its importance developed, traces of the *burh* being found in Saxon times. Houses grew up around the castles of the powerful nobles, the feudal feeling became very strong, the lord of the borough possessed supreme rights over the burghers. He could fine them or throw them into prison, could prevent them leaving any property by will, and could even forbid the marriage of their children, and refuse to allow a widow to take a second husband. The township, which had hitherto sent representatives to the court of the hundred or the shire, found that the leet or manor court at the castle of the feudal lord was the gathering of chief consequence, and they began to lose their independence and importance. As the Church's influence spread, the groups of towns or township became more and more identified with the priest, and was called a parish, from *paroika*, the dwelling of a priest, and as the priests drew an increasing share of the business of the group into their hands, the custom arose of calling the

parishioners to consult and deliberate on ecclesiastical business in the vestry or robing-room of the church, where the feudal lord had no jurisdiction.

As the centuries passed onward, the yoke, both of the Church and the nobility, was in some measure shaken off. Serfdom died out, and, though a great evil in itself, the time of its abolition, like all states of transition, brought much temporary suffering. The poor no longer worked for a tyrant, but neither were they fed by one; the dissolution of the monasteries threw numbers of pensioners into starvation, old men and women, helpless orphan children, the idle, the deserted, the blind, and the diseased were with us then as now. The scattered monks themselves added to the number of the destitute. The labour system of that day still lay under the shadow of the Statutes of Labourers of Richard II.'s reign, and had developed an unmanageable number of helpless labourers, often sinking into utter penury, and in the fifteenth century the great question began to force itself on the minds of all in authority, 'What shall be done with the poor?'

It was in 1601, in the last year of Elizabeth, that the first great Poor Law was passed. By the provisions of this, the old township or parish became once more of first-rate importance. This was due, in the first place, to the presence of the Church. As, in the Middle Ages, the Church had proved the best available channel for handing on learning and the fine arts, so it was now found to have the best, in fact the only machinery which it was possible to put into force for a methodical distribution of charity; so, while the real power to distribute charity was in process of transfer to the people, the meetings still took place in the parish vestry. By the Act of Elizabeth, each parish was to be responsible for its own poor, to administer its own relief, to appoint its own overseer to raise a rate from the householders, and to see it doled out to the proper claimants. The overseers at first held a very prominent post: it was only in 1834 that they were reduced to the position of executive officials, under the control of a body giving voluntary service. From the first, the overseer's most important work consisted in raising the rates. The authorities calculated, as they still do, the sum needed for carrying on the parish work, a valuation being made of all house property in the parish, and a calculation of what amount of levy in the pound will produce the required sum. In the reign of Elizabeth, the mayor and churchwardens drew up

this list, and a clear distinction was drawn, for the first time, between the pauper and the vagabond. All the impotent poor were to be registered, and to be placed in fitting habitations. The overseers were to supply them with flax, wool, and hemp, and to superintend their labour, while houses of correction were established in every parish for those who refused to work. These were intended to suppress vagabondage. The rules were very severe, the law allowing that they might be branded, whipped, and even transported to the American plantations. One rule runs: 'Every strong rogue, at his or her first entrance into the said house, shall have twelve stripes upon the bare skin with the said whip, provided for the said house.' Poor children were to be bound as apprentices. Parents, if able to work, could be forced to maintain their children, and children their parents. This Act embodied all the chief principles for dealing with the poor, which have survived to our own day.

Little change took place in Poor-Law legislation till 1834. By this time parishes had undergone considerable changes. Large towns had grown up in some, others had dwindled in wealth and influence. The union of parishes was not quite a new expedient for equalising circumstances, but it now became almost universal. In 1893, there were six hundred and forty-eight such unions in England, with an average of twenty-two parishes to each union, besides some large parishes, which, not finding it necessary to unite, still manage their affairs singly.

Before this, the law of settlement, by which the liability of any parish to the maintenance of particular paupers was determined, had been much altered. By the Act of 1662, a parish could, within forty days of their arrival, remove all persons likely to become chargeable on the rates unless they inhabited a cottage rented at £10 a year, and large landowners, by refusing to build any cottages at such low rents, were able effectually to keep down the population, in whose aid they might be rated. This law had most disastrous results. A labourer could not leave his native place to look for work without fear of being sent back. People in the last stage of sickness and poverty were moved on every six weeks from one parish to another, and it was necessary to pass a law, providing that they should not be carted away in sickness 'to the danger of their lives.' By 1795, the law had been amended. A man is now legally 'settled' in any parish in which he has lived three years, and should he come upon the rates, he cannot be removed to the

parish of his birth after one year's residence in another. In this way those sad trampings half over England to find the legal parish have been done away with.

Whether single or united with others, the management of the parish Poor Laws are in the hands of a Board of Guardians, elected by ballot by the ratepayers belonging to the parish or different parishes constituting the union. With these persons rests the responsibility of governing the workhouses, and of distributing the seven or eight millions annually raised for the relief of the poor. As soon as a fresh union is formed, the preliminaries are fixed by the Local Government Board, the central authority, and one or more guardians are elected for each township or parish.

To be qualified for a guardian, a person must be a parochial elector in some one parish of the union, or must have lived for twelve months within its area. No person is disqualified by sex or marriage. A spinster, married woman, or widow, having the necessary qualifications, may be elected. Nobody may serve who is acting as the paid official of any union. Such an enactment disqualifies the infirmary doctor, the public vaccinator, the chaplain, and the treasurer, who is a paid officer; but a clerk to the School Board, whose salary is paid out of the School Board rates, is eligible. No one under age can serve, nor any one who has received parochial relief within twelve months previous to election, or who has within five years been convicted of any crime and sentenced to imprisonment without the option of a fine, or who has been through the Bankruptcy Court. Neither can any one who supplies the Board with any kind of goods, or who does any work for it. In one case a town councillor who sold *4d.* worth of oil to the union was disqualified. The guardians sit for three years, and it is now arranged that they retire simultaneously throughout the country. They are bound to meet at least once a month, but more often the meetings take place weekly or fortnightly, and as they cannot transact any business unless one-third of the members are present, it will be seen that the office is no sinecure. In urgent circumstances, such as a fire or the outbreak of an epidemic, a special meeting may be called, when three persons have power to make an order.

Now, being duly elected, what are the duties of a Poor-Law Guardian, the broad principle being the relief of the poor? Their primary duty is to estimate the sum required for administration, to order the overseer to make the valuation

of property in the parishes of the union, and to collect the necessary rate. They have to invite the tender of and to enter into agreement for all contracts for supplying the workhouse with provisions, clothing, and fuel, and to arrange for all repairs. They are obliged to proceed with great caution, bearing in mind that they are spending the ratepayers' money, and that should any payment be made which it is not legal to take out of the poor rates, they will be personally liable. At each meeting they have to consider all the applications made since the last, and to calculate what amount will be sufficient to carry paupers in receipt of relief on to the next. Many applications come before the Board while it is sitting. The widow, whose husband has left her with six children to provide for, attends to ask for help; an old couple, still able to 'do a little,' come to beg for the 5*s.* and loaf, with the help of which they can keep the home together. The matron and the master of the workhouse have every sort of particular to report—the bad conduct of an unmanageable girl, the proposed outfit for one who is taking a situation, the possibility of supplying some little comfort to the aged, or of providing a treat for some special occasion. The reports of committees have to be read, the books and amounts examined, directions given for discipline or for supplying furniture, and ordering and managing stores. Cases of great urgency are dealt with by the relieving officer, and brought before the guardians at the next meeting. They are not allowed to postpone the giving of temporary relief on the ground that an applicant is not settled in the union. They must give relief first, and inquire afterwards.

Any one who is destitute may claim the shelter of the workhouse. On the other hand, no one is legally entitled to outdoor relief, and this is one of the most burning and difficult questions with which guardians have to deal. Outdoor relief may be given in various forms. It may take the form of medical attendance in sickness, allowances to widows, deserted wives, or wives whose husbands are in the army or navy, serving at a distance, allowances to old people who can only partly support themselves, or the provision of relief work for able-bodied men. Every one who knows the poor intimately, knows the silent anguish of the long struggle of the more respectable among them before the 'House' is reached, and how they will pinch and starve before they will resign themselves to pass into that life of drear monotony and to assume the indelible brand of pauper.

Outdoor relief does not arouse the same shrinking, but, that the guardians have to look to it, that pity does not outrun firmness, as well as to recollect that the workhouse should be a place calculated to have a deterrent effect upon pauperism, is proved by the disastrous results which followed its indiscriminate use in the early part of this century.

The long and exhausting wars that marked the close of the last and the beginning of this century, and the introduction of machinery into manufacturing industries had combined to raise the price of bread extraordinarily high, and to throw hundreds of labourers out of work. The country was threatened with famine, riots were of frequent occurrence, the memory of the French Revolution was fresh in the minds of the governing classes. Great pity was felt for the sufferings of the poor, and in many counties it was resolved to distribute outdoor relief on what was known as the 'bread scale,' reckoning the sum on which a labourer could live, giving so much wheat a head. The disastrous consequences of this system soon became apparent. What had been given as a charity was soon claimed as a right; the recklessness of the donors increased, thrift and self-respect were destroyed in the recipients, and an investigation, which took place in 1834, revealed an almost incredible condition of abuse and degradation. With every new dole pauperism had risen by leaps and bounds; half the able-bodied poor were clamouring for it. Overseers were careless of the public funds, and afraid to refuse the demands made upon them. Boys began to receive parish pay on their own account at fourteen years of age, and a case is quoted in a tract published by the Women's Co-operative Society, where four strong young men, receiving from 12*s.* to 15*s.* a week from the parish, refused to thresh for a farmer at 2*s.* 6*d.* and a quart of ale per day. 'It was not uncommon for newly-married couples to walk straight from the church to the overseer and demand a house to live in.' Not only was idleness encouraged, but profligacy, for a widow who received 1*s.* 6*d.* a week for her own children, had 2*s.* or more for her illegitimate child. Women refused to nurse their own children unless they were paid for it; men threatened to leave their aged parents at the overseer's door, and cases of deserted children were numerous.'

It was an ordinary occurrence for an employer to get his friends to book the application of one of his hands for outdoor relief. The employee, having been granted a pension for life,

could then afford to underbid men dependent on their unassisted earnings, and the mill-owner having thrown his old servant on the public funds, received him back at reduced wages.

The inquiry resulted in the establishment of a central, now known as the Local Government Board, and more stringent measures were revived.

Great inequality, however, still remains. In one district where the guardians administer relief as if it were a charitable fund, and where small pensions are readily granted, over six hundred outdoor poor are on the books and the expenditure rises to £80 a week.

An initial difficulty which confronts guardians lies in the fact that outdoor, like all other relief, must be paid out of the local rates, so that the poorer the district the heavier is the poor rate, and relief to the pauper class is collected amongst those who themselves can barely keep their heads above water.

Again, it is a fact that outdoor relief drives down wages. A poor woman who gets her living by mangling articles at 2*d.* a dozen is liable to have her price cut down because another woman who 'has the money' is able to offer to do them for 1½*d.* The stoppage of outdoor relief in the parish of Bradfield, raised the wages of charwomen all round by 6*d.* a day. The lady commissioners assert in their well-known report that outdoor relief among the workers in the Nottingham hosiery trade, where the earnings average 3*s.*, and 3*s.* 6*d.* a week, undoubtedly keeps down wages. Since outdoor relief has been refused to able-bodied paupers they have practically ceased to exist, and we find the total of aged pauperism only half, in the unions which refuse it to this class. It must be borne in mind that as destitution is the only ground for affording poor relief, no measures for assisting prospective ruin are possible. These must be left to charity, for in attempting to deal with such cases, the distributors of the rates would be swamped.

The giving of medical relief is often much abused, and by taking it a large number of persons are familiarised with the system. 'Oh, it is only medical relief,' they say; but the obligation to insure or to make provision against sickness is discarded, and they are gradually reduced to hopeless pauperism. The best alternative is perhaps a provident dispensary, established by the union. This has been done in many instances with marked success. The steward of each parish, who receives subscriptions half-yearly, is a lady or gentleman of position.

Adults pay about 4*s.*, children 2*s.*, widows and their children 2*s.* 6*d.* and 1*s.* These prices rule at Milton, in Kent, where the dispensary established in 1857 has now over 3000 members. In Whitechapel the discontinuation of outdoor relief has resulted in the establishment of a network of organised charities which have undertaken the benevolent work of saving the really deserving from the Poor Law.

In the case of widows, the rule is that no one with only one child to support receives aid. Natural compassion inclines us to advocate helping those left with large families, but even this requires careful discrimination. It is well known that numbers of widows of the poorer class do maintain and bring up large families independently of pauper relief. More often than is supposed a widow receives a lump sum, subscribed by her husband's fellow-workmen to enable her to make a start. When no dole is accepted assistance comes more readily from relations, and even a severe struggle is to be preferred to supine reliance upon outside keep, which induces the recipient to relax her efforts to gain her livelihood. When outdoor relief was refused to widows at Bradfield and the house offered instead, out of fifty-five widows with 215 children who applied, only one with eleven children accepted. Many of the others were afterwards found to be doing well, and to be receiving full remuneration for their labour.

Perhaps the most difficult cases to refuse are those of old people still able partially to support themselves, and whose work, even if paid in proportion to its worth, is not worth a living wage; but even these should be carefully supervised, and if possible referred to voluntary charity. It is not generally known that old couples over sixty cannot be legally separated in the workhouse against their wish. Rooms are set aside in which they can live together, and if either is so ill as to be placed in the infirmary, a visit may be provided for every day. The restriction of outdoor relief in such cases often brings relatives to a sense of their duties, and discourages the neglect of parents by their children, which is one of the greatest evils which the Poor Law has to encounter.

Where the workhouse test is offered it is not accepted by one in ten; but when once outdoor relief is found to be obtainable reliance is placed upon that resource, and the greatest incentive to thrift and exertion is destroyed.

In times of exceptional distress it is the guardians who decide whether work is to be provided by the rates, and if it is decided

to find such work, to them is left the task of making it as little demoralising, as unfortunately pauper labour always proves to be. They must not do so much, as will check that active charity which great distress always calls forth, and which is the least harmful way of meeting it.

Perhaps of all the duties of the Guardians of the Poor none is so important as that of dealing with the lives and destinies of pauper children. It is they who decide whether they shall be brought up within the walls of the workhouse, or who urge the central authority to allow them to expend the rates upon cottage settlements or district schools, who make arrangements for boarding them out with foster parents, who emigrate them or send them to service, or apprentice them to a trade. The details upon which they can pronounce are countless. It is their doing that in some workhouses, the unappetizing change is rung on suet and rice—rice and suet from one year's end to another; or that here the girls shiver through the winter in thin cotton frocks, while in a neighbouring house the stout woollen garb is never changed in summer, and the girls doing house and laundry work are reported to be saturated with perspiration—small and vulgar details these, but making what an enormous difference in the lives of children!

Lady Meath's scheme (known as the Brabazon scheme), for cheering the lives of the aged and infirm in the workhouses—a society which distributes materials for work, teaches simple handicrafts, and sells the results for the worker's benefit—has brought brightness and alleviation into many dreary lives, and, to do them justice, the guardians have in most unions warmly welcomed its introduction; but there are still some who shut the door in its face, and who condemn the poor and failing inmates to long dull days of monotonous idleness. Guardians are empowered to appoint special committees, not necessarily from their own number, to go over the workhouse and to look minutely into the cleanliness of the buildings, the managements of dress and cooking, and all the questions which so materially affect the well-being of the occupants. They pronounce upon the nursing of the sick, upon the food and clothing, the drainage, the warmth and ventilation of the workhouse and infirmary. The master and matron, under direction of the guardians, fix the hours of rising and going to bed of old and delicate people and children.

The dealing with imbeciles, and their care and treatment, is another grave responsibility and one needing vigilance and

judgment. The Local Government Board says truly in its latest circular, that whether a workhouse be well or ill administered depends on the personal interest the guardians take in the matter. They add, 'the work is often arduous, and the constant attention to small details which is absolutely necessary may impose a heavy tax on the time and patience of the guardians, but the Board feel sure that they may rely upon those who take upon themselves the office, discharging their duties with a due sense of the responsibility the position involves.'

I think I have said enough to show how much there is for women to do in this branch of local government.

In 1888 of some 19,000 guardians elected, only 70 were women. It is amusing enough now to read the answer given in 1850 by the central authority, to the question whether women were eligible for election. An official circular was issued, which, after stating that no words exist which imply disability, adds, 'but the objections to the appointment of a female to any office of this nature upon grounds of public feeling and convenience, are so manifest that the Board cannot readily suppose that the question will become one of practical importance in the administration of the Poor Laws.'

It is curious that this is the way in which the possibility of women relieving poverty, deciding questions of sick nursing, the rearing of children, and the care of the aged, should have been regarded, and fortunate that women disregarding the shocked feelings of officialdom have pressed steadily forward, until now more than 900 are serving as guardians, and their presence on a Board is considered as much an advantage as it has become a matter of course.

It is easy to see how usefully women may fill such a post. Their practical knowledge of domestic life helps them to deal easily with many of the needs arising, they are quicker than men to judge of the shortcomings or capabilities of the nurses, they understand the wants of young children as few men can do. They can influence and interest themselves in the girls and young women, and most women have a peculiar talent for individualising and humanising what at best is apt to become a deadening mechanism. The work is hard and not always pleasant. Very unsavoury cases have not infrequently to be discussed and dealt with, but the most modest and most cultivated women are those whose purity will be least easily sullied by hearing about what their less fortunate fellow-creatures have to

endure, and there is a great deal of testimony to show that the mere presence of refined women has raised the tone of Boards, and has enforced greater delicacy of language and more considerate behaviour when dealing with female paupers, often in painfully distressing circumstances.

If women can carry no great reforms, they can at least spur on the men with whom they work. As one of them observed at the Women Workers Conference, 'We are always asking for things on our Board which the men laugh at us for thinking necessary, but we generally find that they come round to our way in the long run.'

It is to be hoped that many more women will come forward at the next elections in 1900, so that out of 30,000 guardians the proportions of male and female may be further equalised. Here is a splendid opportunity for doing some of the most useful work of the country, which, taking much time and being unpaid, can seldom be undertaken save by women having means and leisure. That it needs natural capability will be evident. Common sense, sound judgment, self-control, and perseverance are amongst the qualities it calls for. Some training too is necessary. Real knowledge of the poor gained by steady parish work, or a course under the supervision of the Charity Organization Society. A study of social and economic questions, readings on the administration of the Poor Law, combined with a heartfelt sympathy for the troubles of the poor, and the power to bear patiently with their weakness and shortcomings. An increasing number of admirable women are following in the steps of Miss Davenport-Hill, who is retiring after twenty-five years' work, of Mrs. S. A. Barnett, Miss Lidgett, Miss Eves, and other pioneers on this road. The task is hard and toilsome, it is one for which they get little thanks or honour. The effort to raise their fellow-citizens out of the slough of pauperism is one that takes all the strength, ingenuity, and wisdom of those who apply themselves to attack these problems; but those who have tried it are not slow to testify that the work, though often discouraging, is intensely interesting; and not unhopeful, that in that vast sea of human nature where drift so many shattered wrecks, there are gleams of light and opportunities for rescue, and that if they encounter vice and sorrow and terrible hereditary weakness, they also meet with silent endurance, with heroic struggle, with pathetic self-sacrifice.

EVELYN MARCH-PHILLIPPS.

THE SIKHS.

THE fighting that has been going on on the Indian frontier has attracted exceptional attention to the forces that have been so stoutly upholding the honour of British arms; and we have all been reminded very forcibly that the soldiers who have merited the heartiest and most enthusiastic applause are many of them British only as members of one great empire; dark-skinned heroes, alien from ourselves in race, in religion, in manners, yet comrades in arms, who will fight not unworthily shoulder to shoulder with the stoutest troops our western islands can send forth. At this moment, the names of the Sikhs and Gurkhas are household words in England, as familiar as 'The Gordons.'

Yet it would be curious to inquire how many of us know anything at all about Sikh or Gurkha. Probably a general impression prevails, accurate so far as it goes, that the Sikhs are big men and the Gurkhas little men. I wonder how many readers of this magazine would give, off-hand, correct answers to the following questions:—1. Are (*a*) the Sikhs, (*b*) the Gurkhas, Hindus, or Mohammedans, or neither, or mixed? 2. In what part or parts of India are they to be found respectively? 3. Did either take an active part in the struggle of the Mutiny? 4. Who were (*a*) Ranjit Singh, (*b*) Jung Bahadur?

Now I am not going to set about answering precisely those questions; but it has appeared to me that the readers of the 'Monthly Packet' might very well like to know something about these same Sikhs who have been doing such valiant service.

To talk about India to people who will not look at a map is to attempt sowing seed upon rocky ground; especially when you are bound to begin with some geographical observations. Every invader of India—until the English came by sea—descended through the passes in the mountains on the north-western side, beyond which lies Afghanistan. Once through the mountains, the first obstacle encountered is the great river

Indus. Beyond the Indus lies the Punjab—the 'Land of the Five Rivers'—in the form of a great triangle; whereof one side is the main stream of the Indus—the second is the river Sutlej, flowing south-west and west, and joining the Indus below Multan—and the third, lying from north-west to south-east, is the mountainous country going up to Cashmere. This is the Punjab proper, though the whole province which is now included in that title extends eastwards as far as the Jumna. In the first part of the present century, the Punjab proper formed the Lahore State, while the 'protected' district on the British side of the Sutlej was known as Malwa. The Punjab and Malwa are the land of the Sikhs; but the Punjab was annexed by Lord Dalhousie, while the Malwa Sikhs are still 'protected.'

An occasional schoolboy probably knows that in religion the natives of India are almost entirely divided between some form of Hinduism and Mohammedanism; Hindus forming the immense majority. The Mussulmans are either direct descendants of invaders, Afghan or Tartar, or of Hindus who were in effect compulsorily absorbed into the conquering religion. During the long centuries in which all Upper India was the scene of perpetual incursions of hordes of fanatical Mussulmans, whose religion was essentially aggressive, and in whose eyes the destruction of idols and the desecration of idolatrous shrines were acts of grace, war was an affair of religion very much more than of statecraft; and it will be obvious that the Hindus of the Punjab had their full share of fighting, whereby, among other things, they were educated up to a special intensity of enmity to Mussulman rule. On the other hand, insomuch as beyond the Indus, Islam became supreme at a very early date, it naturally resulted that a comparatively large proportion of Mohammedans retained their footing in the Punjab.

In the latter half of the fifteenth century, within a few years of each other, were born Baber, who founded the Mogul empire, and Nanuk, who founded the Sikh brotherhood.

For, to begin with, the Sikhs were not a separate race or nation at all. They were simply the followers, the 'disciples'—that is what their name means—of a singularly lofty-minded religious teacher. Nanuk, born and bred a Hindu, did not reject what he regarded as the essentials of Hinduism; but he did entirely discard those incrustations which are pre-eminently characteristic of it. He found salvation not in pious observances, but in

virtuous life. He preached a gospel of brotherhood in which caste has no place; and the countless Powers of the Hindu pantheon were lost in the Supreme Will.

The brotherhood grew, gathering to itself chiefs and people, united in a purer faith, and recognising among themselves no religious distinction between the chief and the yeomen. Only a 'Guru,' Prophet, or Mouthpiece of God to the Disciples was recognised. But as the body grew, it began to assume a political significance, until the tenth Guru, Govind Singh, recast the brotherhood in a new form, giving it a military organisation, and himself acting not less as a captain than as a high priest. The Sikh brotherhood was converted into the 'Khalsa,' the Army of the Free; the name of Singh (Lion) was adopted by all. A new rite of initiation—a species of baptism—was instituted, and curious distinctive rites established, such as retaining the hair and beard uncut, the prohibition of tobacco, the adoption of blue as the distinctive colour of the Khalsa. The spiritual aspect of the organisation was absorbed in the political; a state of things which may be illustrated in the history of these islands by the 'Solemn League and Covenant.' A religious body defying the tyranny of the infidel is apt very soon to account loyalty to itself as the one cardinal virtue, for the sake of which most vices may be pardoned; and the Sikhs who gathered round Govind were not called upon to display any abnormal tenderness of conscience provided they were true to the Khalsa.

In the early days of the brotherhood, the Mogul empire was established. But the great Emperor Akbar and his son and grandson were no fanatical Mussulmans, and there was little in the nature of religious persecution. A change, however, had come with the accession of Aurungzebe, whose reign extended over half a century, ending in 1707. His Moslem fanaticism roused the Hindu spirit all over India, and was the direct cause of the change which at the same time came over the Sikh body. Antagonism to Islam in general, and to the Moguls in particular, was the central article of the faith taught by Govind.

Thus, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the group of Nanuk's disciples had developed into a military confederacy of chiefs, who, with their retainers, were animated by an *esprit-de-corps* of singular intensity. Originally of varying, though probably kindred stock, the abolition of caste had allowed them to amalgamate in a way which has virtually rendered them a

separate race, but with religion as the fundamental basis of their unity.

The eighteenth century saw first the break-up of the Mogul empire; then the renewal of desolating invasions from beyond the mountains, when Nadir Shah swept down to Delhi, and dealt destruction far and wide. After him came Ahmed Shah, the Durani chief, who established a dynasty at Cabul. Meantime, the French and British fought out their preliminary struggle for supremacy in the Carnatic, and Clive avenged the 'Black Hole' by the conquest of Bengal. Those were days of tribulation for the Sikhs, who lived in a chronic state of desperate fighting against immense odds. But, as the century drew to its close, the Afghan kings found they had enough to do in maintaining their throne at Cabul; the emperor at Delhi had lost every shred of power. The Sikhs gathered strength; they formed a confederacy of groups known as 'Misls,' which gradually extended their dominions and absorbed fresh members; until, at the opening of the nineteenth century, they dominated the greater part of the Punjab, and one young chief, distinguished not less by his astuteness than by his valour, was rapidly winning recognition as the head of the whole Sikh body within the Land of the Five Rivers; though the Sikhs of Malwa, who had more to fear from the great Mahratta power on the south than from Afghanistan, chose rather to place themselves under the protection of the British than to accept the domination of Ranjit Singh.

For thirty years, that exceptionally able monarch devoted himself steadily to the organisation and extension of a mighty military power beyond the Sutlej. His army, the Khalsa, was to be the finest military instrument that an Indian prince had ever had at command. For him, the army was the state. With a political sagacity rare in India, he recognised from the first that whatever perfection that army might attain, whatever exploits it might perform, its doom would be sealed on the day when it challenged the British power, which in fifty years had conquered Bengal, overthrown Mysore, and mastered the Mahrattas. But he was determined that even the British should respect him; and therein he succeeded; while he extended his own dominion to Peshawur, to Kashmir, to Multan.

The material with which Ranjit Singh had to work is not easy to describe accurately in western terminology. Neither the feudal system of Europe, nor the clan system of the Scottish

highlands presents at all an exact analogy, though both have points of resemblance. At the time when he began to come to the front, there was no Sikh state properly so called, and no recognised head. The 'Sirdars'—barons or chiefs—within certain territorial areas had become grouped together in 'Misls,' each with a greater or less body of retainers, all bound together as comrades in faith and in arms, forming a peculiar people separate from their neighbours, yet acknowledging kinship with Hindu races. They were ready enough to fight each other, but ready also to unite against a common foe; while the whole body was inured to arms. By conciliation or suppression, Ranjit Singh won the position of their recognised head. He studied the English model; he obtained the aid of skilled European soldiers: and with these materials he organised and drilled an army which looked upon itself as the true State.

Between 1808 and 1820, a series of intrigues with, and campaigns against, various Afghan governors, placed Ranjit Singh gradually in possession of Peshawur, Multan, and Kashmir. The effective retention of these provinces kept the Khalsa pretty sufficiently occupied until the Maharajah's death in 1739; just when the British were at the beginning of that expedition into Afghanistan which ended so disastrously.

The removal of Ranjit Singh's strong hand was followed by a period of growing anarchy. The Khalsa was not slow to learn its power. Success had made it arrogant. The Kabul disaster played havoc with British prestige; while it demanded an intelligence, as acute as the Maharajah's had been, to realise that what England wanted in the Punjab was not a subject province but a strong state in secure alliance. But within the Punjab, the army was asserting political supremacy for itself, while intriguers were fostering its wish to challenge British supremacy. In the middle of December, 1845, the gage was thrown down: the Sikh army crossed the Sutlej.

Up to the last moment, the Governor-General, Lord Hardinge, maintained his strong desire to avert a war. Any open movement of troops to the frontier would inevitably have precipitated it; consequently when the crisis came, the whole army ready to take the field was dangerously small. Within the week, however, the advanced regiments met and scattered the advanced column of Sikhs, at Moodkee, after a fierce encounter, which showed the mettle of which the foe were made. Three days later a desperate fight was fought at Ferozeshah. The Sikhs

had entrenched themselves with much skill; they were well supplied with artillery; and though the British broke through their lines at nightfall, it was found necessary to fall back for the night, and carry the position next morning, when a fresh body of Sikhs appeared on the scene. Exhausted as our men were, it was fortunate that the new-comers did not appreciate their own advantages, and elected to retire; for it is no exaggeration to say that for some hours the British army was face to face with a possibility of annihilation. Had the Sikhs been successful at Ferozeshah, the British Empire in India would hardly have been in less danger than when, a dozen years later, everything was staked on the storming of Delhi. But the Sikhs retreated; the British were reinforced; and, after a brilliant victory at Aliwal, the Khalsa was finally crushed at the terrific struggle of Sobraon. The courage and determination shown by the Sikhs throughout the campaign are sufficiently attested by the fact, that in these four pitched battles the British losses amounted to nearly fifteen hundred killed and nearly five thousand wounded.

Lord Hardinge was resolutely opposed to annexation; but the Sikh sirdars were sick of the domination of the Khalsa, and conscious of their own inability to control it. Hardinge, therefore, agreed to appoint a Resident, with, in effect, the powers of a dictator; and the post was given to Henry Lawrence.

Lawrence's government was attended with marked success, and both he and several of his subordinate officers achieved an astonishing influence with some of the sirdars, and among the wild hill tribes. But at the end of 1847, Lawrence's health compelled his retirement: his successor lacked his unique abilities; intrigues were rife at the court and throughout the country; and in April, 1848, the governor of Multan revolted, and murdered two British officers who had been sent to control him.

Lieutenant Herbert Edwardes, who was in political employment beyond the Indus, at the head of some native levies made a dash for Multan, defeated the insurgents, and drove them into the town. More than this he could not do; and he pressed urgently for reinforcements which he thought would enable him to carry Multan himself. At the same time urgent representations were being made by officers on the north-west frontier, of the need for some British troops there. Lord Gough, the commander-in-chief, was, however, convinced that the whole

Punjab was preparing to rise; that to send one brigade here and another there was to court almost certain destruction; that the Multan climate would decimate European troops in the hot weather; and that, finally, a campaign in winter with a force which would once for all crush the Sikh power was the only practicable policy. In this Lord Dalhousie, who had succeeded Hardinge as Governor-General, concurred. The Resident at Lahore, however, had powers which enabled him to force Gough's hand, and ordered the dispatch of a column to Multan; whereupon Gough took measures to ensure that, since a force must go, it should be an adequate one.

Now the Multan revolt was not in form a rising of the Sikhs against the British, but of a Mohammedan province against the Lahore government. Consequently, besides the British troops, a Sikh army under Shere Singh was dispatched to quell the rebellion—while Shere Singh's father, Chutter Singh, was exerting himself to the utmost to bring about a Sikh rising in the north-west. The natural consequences followed. Shere Singh appears to have himself honestly wished to remain loyal; but the pressure brought to bear by the father in the north, and by the troops he was himself leading, proved too much for him. In the middle of September, he and his army marched over bag and baggage to the enemy, and then leaving Multan to take care of itself proceeded northwards, gathering to his standard the old members of the Khalsa, and proclaiming the end of British rule.

For the second time, the Khalsa had directly challenged the British. On the first occasion they had been thoroughly beaten, yet once for a time the issue had been doubtful, and a belief prevailed among the soldiery that they had owed defeat mainly to the treachery of their generals. The contest now was to be conclusive. In November, Lord Gough entered the Punjab at the head of the army which he had been gathering. Shere Singh held a position on the Chenab, one of the five rivers, beyond Lahore. From this he was driven back, by a flank movement to Russool on the Jhelum, a strong position among hills, fronted by jungle. With his previous knowledge of the Sikh capacity for defending an entrenched position, Lord Gough had no wish to attack, at any rate until Multan should fall, and the division there engaged be then released to swell the British army and strengthen the British artillery. The insurgents, however, had been successful in the north-west; first

Peshawur and then Attok fell into their hands; and now Chutter Singh was coming down to join his son. The commander-in-chief was urged to 'win a victory'—which, as he remarked in his private diary, was 'easier said than done.' He marched upon Russool, and on January 13th was fought the bloody battle of Chilliauwalla; in which the British remained masters of the field, but at the cost of frightful carnage; while the Sikhs escaped to their entrenchments. However, the fall of Multan a fortnight later set reinforcements free; Shere Singh, probably with a view to threatening Lahore, moved from Russool to Gujerat; and there he was finally and decisively crushed, chiefly by the admirable use of the artillery in which now, for the first time, the British were better off than their opponents.

The events of the last few years had made it abundantly clear that the chance of the Sikhs establishing a strong government for themselves was extremely remote. Anarchy in the Punjab could not be tolerated; annexation appeared to be the only alternative; and in March, 1849, the Lahore State was formally added to the British dominions and placed under British rule.

The pacification of the Punjab is one of the greatest achievements of the British 'Raj.' Under the administration, of which first Henry and then John Lawrence was head, anarchy disappeared, taxation was minimised, and prosperity increased among all ranks save the sirdars, whom Henry would have fostered, whereas John, holding them the one dangerous class, systematically suppressed their influence. The Khalsa had ceased to exist. All over the country, men like Edwardes, Nicholson, and Abbott became objects of intense personal devotion; and when the stormy days of the Mutiny came, the levies raised from among the very men who eight years before had challenged our supremacy with such stubborn valour, did yeoman's service in suppressing the revolt. They had learned once for all that we were their masters; that, face to face, we were too strong for them; and would be too strong for them again. But they know, and they have shown the world, that side by side with us, and led by British officers, they may be trusted as veritable comrades in arms, whose loyalty and valour no enemy can afford to despise.

A. D. INNES.

THE CAROL OF THE SHEEP.

Now, prithee, minstrel, tell to me
Who did the herald Angels see,
When loud they sang in holy glee,
That Christmas night in far Judee?
'O all the world lay wrapped in sleep:
None woke or stirred from slumber deep,
Save just a flock of lowly sheep,
And shepherds who that flock did keep!'

Now, prithee, minstrel, who did hear
That first of Christmas anthems dear,
When hosts of Angels did appear,
And music sounded far and near?
'O none did hear that carol sweet,
Which Angels sang mankind to greet,
Save gentle sheep in safe retreat,
And shepherds from their watchful seat!'

Say, who was there, that blessed night,
To mark the wondrous, dazzling sight,
When earth was lit with heavenly light,
And shining Angels winged their flight?
'O none beheld that sudden blaze,
Which lit the night with noon-day rays,
Save wistful sheep with wondering gaze,
And shepherds filled with great amaze!'

Now, prithee, minstrel, tell me why
To sheep and shepherds God on high
Did bid the herald Angels fly,
Proclaiming where the Babe did lie?

'Twas meet that Angel hosts were seen
By gentle sheep in pastures green;
For ere the world was made, I ween,
Dear Christ the Lamb of God had been.

'Twas meet that shepherds did behold,
And hear the blessed tidings told;
For Christ, true Shepherd of the Fold,
Had come to earth, that winter cold!'
O Lamb, O Shepherd, we would be
Thy sheep, enfolded safe by Thee;
And with the shepherds, joyfully,
At Manger-Throne now bend the knee?

E. M. D.

THE CALCULATIONS OF BUDH SINGH.

A TALE OF THE WESTERN HIMALAYAS.

BY HELEN BOULNOIS.

THE sum was not large that Budh Singh had to pay to the revenue-collector of the Rajah of Chumba for the piece of land which he had inherited from his father.

Nevertheless his wife was sorrowfully obliged to tie up their last rupee in the bag of money that he had to carry into the neighbouring town to hand over to the authorities.

Thither he—whom we cannot call our hero—resorted too often for a purpose not so worthy as that which called him there on the present occasion. Usually he spent his time there in gambling. In this engrossing pursuit cultivation was neglected, wife and children left uncared for, and the admonitions of his father were forgotten.

But life glides on easily in an old out-of-the-world region like Chumba, among the lower ranges of the hills that are the off-sets of the Himalayas. The land supplied the few wants of his family, whose daily sustenance consisted of the grain and herbs that grew vigorously on the healthy soil, and was carefully stored by the nearest grain-dealer for the winter. The caste fellows too of the little village helped one another, according to their custom. Little labour was required to water Budh Singh's plot. Abundant waterfalls and torrents were formed by the meeting of the snows, tumbling down the hillsides and hurrying away to join the turbulent waves of the river Ravi—the ancient Hydraotes—which, passing in its infancy through this country, cut its channels through rocky beds to the plains of the Punjab.

On his walk of a dozen miles Budh Singh had to cross a tributary of this river at a point where the torrent passed between cliffs several hundred feet high. Sudden drops in the river-bed formed cataracts deep below the level of the country. A formidable obstacle in a walk. Connecting the two cliffs

hung the fragile Jhula Bridge. This is perhaps the earliest form of a suspension bridge, originating, not in the scientific mind of the European engineer, but in the instinctive notions of a primitive and simple race.

Two strands of twisted twigs, with a third a few inches below, run parallel from cliff to cliff, curving downwards with a considerable drop in the middle. The third strand is tied to the two above by twig ropes at frequent intervals. The feet of the traveller rest on the third strand while he steadies himself by grasping the upper ones with his hands.

Thus is formed the Jhula Bridge—Jhula meaning 'swing,' which the bridge most certainly does.

Budh Singh paused and examined the bridge carefully before trusting his valuable person upon it. Not infrequently these bridges fall out of repair, and hillmen sometimes meet their death in this way.

Having decided, so far as he could judge, that the bridge was secure, he invoked the aid of his local god and carefully picked his way across it, often stopping, that the bridge might steady itself before he dared advance, and thus eventually reaching the other side in safety.

Towards evening, having parted with his bag of money, he set his face towards the bridge; now on his homeward way. He walked gloomily along, picturing the sad, reproachful eyes with which his wife would greet him. He had a few pice left. These he determined to take and perhaps double or treble by a stroke of luck next day in Chumba.

Turning over such thoughts in his mind he was startled by a cheerful voice saluting him, and, raising his head, he saw his distant kinsman, Beni Ram, at work in his garden.

'Ram—Ram,' called Beni Ram, 'is it well with you, Bhai* Bhund?"

Beni Ram was a favourite with his fellowmen. He had a genial nature, was skilful too in woodcraft. He knew where to find the comb of the wild bees, could track the bear and the wild-cat, and imitate the night-owl.

Budh Singh stopped unwillingly, salaamed, and sulkily replied that it was well with him.

'I have been thinking of you, my friend,' said Beni Ram. 'Is it not time to repay those rupees I lent you in the month of Sraban, it is now two years ago?'

* Brother of the Family.

Budh Singh looked sideways at him, noted his happy smile, the flowers in his cap, his prosperous appearance, and the soul of Budh Singh turned sour within him.

'Let me consider,' he said slowly. 'Was it not two hundred rupees?'

'Thereabouts,' said Beni Ram. 'To be exact the sum was rupees two hundred and fifty.'

'Rupees two hundred and fifty,' repeated Budh Singh, shifting uneasily from one leg to the other, and clawing with lean fingers at his beard.

Beni Ram waited patiently. There was a queer, absent look about Budh Singh, but he spoke at last.

'I have been calculating,' he said. 'Debt weighs heavily upon me, and the money lies at present in my house. I should like to pay you. We must live very carefully for many years, and it can be done.'

Beni Ram's face betrayed his pleasure, and Budh Singh, seeing it, hated him yet more.

'I wish to pay you this very hour,' said Budh Singh. 'But I have already gone far to-day, and cannot go to my house and return here. Could you therefore come with me, and receive the money at my house?'

A walk was no trouble to the hillman, and Beni Ram joyfully agreed to this sensible proposal. He set forth with Budh Singh at a brisk pace, ready to keep up a flow of conversation, but he soon found this was not to the taste of his preoccupied companion, and considerately left him to pursue his own thoughts.

Arrived at the bridge Budh Singh, apparently without design, stepped on to it first. Beni Ram, quite at ease on the perilous bridge, followed Budh Singh with a careless heart. No sooner had Budh Singh seen that Beni Ram was on the bridge behind him than he rushed forward with reckless speed, causing the bridge to rock and swing in mid-air.

Beni Ram raised his head to remonstrate. As he saw Budh Singh a horrid suspicion flashed through his mind. He stopped short.

Budh Singh reached the further side, tore his hatchet from his belt, and, with high uplifted arm, brought it down with such force that a strand was severed by each single blow.

With a yell of mingled rage and despair Beni Ram threw himself round on the bridge and made the superhuman efforts of a desperate man to reach the cliff he had just left.

He was too late. Budh Singh's calculations were correct. Down swung the bridge, the end splashing into the torrent below. A second yell rang through the air and awoke the echoes of the rocks. But the sullen roar of the torrent deadened the shriek, and before long was the only sound that broke upon the silence.

The affrighted Budh Singh, not daring to look around, now that his foul deed was done, fled without a backward glance from the spot. He ran till he could run no further up the rugged path for want of breath.

There was reassurance in the silence of the woods, and it calmed the agitated nerves of Budh Singh.

'That was well done, Budh Singh,' he hastily muttered to himself to still the beating of his heart. 'Exceedingly well done. All will think the bridge broke down for want of repair. It often does. Only the other day my own uncle lost his life on a bridge over the river Ravi. No one will suspect Budh Singh. Very few, if any, knew that I owed him money. Besides, I will take care to remark that the bridge is in want of repair, and to appear horrified when I hear of the death of Beni Ram. My dear cousin, Beni Ram! Such a good man! Who used to bring honey to the children! I will weep and appear distracted.'

'I am very glad to have come safely home,' said Budh Singh to his wife, as he entered the door of his hut. 'The bridge was rotten, and I might have fallen into the torrent.'

He repeated this observation several times in the course of the evening, that there might be no danger of her forgetting this important piece of evidence. He went to sleep convinced that he deserved a good night's rest, for had he not delivered his family from debt?

Next morning, according to his intention, he set out for the town of Chumba, having to cross the torrent some miles further down by the next Jhula Bridge.

He proceeded straight to the Chaugan ground in the centre of the town, where the inhabitants used formerly to play polo. There he fell to gambling with other friendly idlers.

It was now common talk that the bridge was down, and Budh Singh grumbled loudly at having, in consequence, to take a longer walk.

His luck was good, and his spirits rose. Little idea had Budh Singh that retribution was on his track!

Suddenly, in the midst of his playing, his eyes fixed in a glassy stare, his face turned sickly pale through his dusky skin, the pice slipped from his stiffened fingers, his jaw dropped. His companions, startled by his appearance, turned their heads half fearfully, expecting to see some awful apparition behind them.

A gay figure was coming towards them with his usual genial smile and jaunty step, the flower in his cap hanging in correct fashion over his ear.

Beni Ram!

A little in advance walked the Kotwal,* attended by more than one Bhurkundaz.

'Was this reality, or some hideous dream?' questioned Budh Singh, with trembling limbs.

Surely the god of these hills, whose car stood hard by on the plain, surely this god had an antipathy to him? Miserable Budh Singh! The Kotwal's severe order, the firm grasp of his attendant Bhurkundaz was indeed no dream, but a stern reality. Budh Singh obeyed mechanically, and turned his steps to the Kotwali.† Some questions of a more searching description than are allowed in the criminal justice of this country were immediately put to him.

'When you cut down the bridge in front of Beni Ram did you not look to see what became of him?'

'Protector of the poor!' gasped Budh Singh, 'have mercy upon me!'

The kotwal replied with dignity—

'No, I will not, guilty man! Confess, and tell me all.'

'Incarnation of justice, how can a poor man, such as I, do anything but obey you?'

'That is well,' said the kotwal. 'See there, Beni Ram, who charges you with having cut the Jhula that he might fall into the water and be dashed to pieces.'

Budh Singh could not attempt to deny it, more especially as he was under the firm belief that Beni Ram had been miraculously protected, and that it was vain to fight against the Power that ruled their destinies.

The escape of Beni Ram was not, however, due to a miracle, but to a very simple cause. A fall from the Jhula Bridge appeared to ensure certain death. But we must return to that

* Chief officer of the police in a native state.

† Guard-house.

awful moment when Beni Ram had only time to turn round in a vain effort to reach the cliff he had left. Still he had time to turn, and, insignificant as this fact may seem, it saved his life. Down swung the bridge of twigs, reduced at once to a mere network; but, instead of being precipitated head downwards into the torrent, Beni Ram retained his grasp of the ropes. Accustomed to climbing giddy heights he neither lost his head nor the clutch with his hands, which he had instinctively taken, while his feet rapidly sought for and found the twigs serving as cross-ropes. After a few minutes' violent swinging and swaying, during which time he had some rough encounters with the rugged side of the cliff, the Jhula Bridge settled down, even to the extent of forming him a rough rope ladder, up which he cautiously climbed, until he crawled in safety over the edge of the cliff.

Budh Singh soon found himself toiling in irons; and thus usefully employed it is to be hoped that he acquired those habits of industry which had hitherto been conspicuous only by their absence from his character.

THE CANARY ISLANDS.

PAST AND PRESENT.

RIGHT in the track of Cape Liners, at distances varying from sixty to two hundred and fifty miles from the parched north-western shores of Africa, lie the Canary Islands, which have afforded, and for that matter still afford, endless food for the speculations of scientific inquirers of all sorts and conditions. A couple of hundred years ago, not even their number was a matter of certainty; seven large islands could be sworn to then, as now, by all hands, but certain imaginative mariners affirmed with confidence that they had seen, and moreover, watered their ships at an eighth, larger and more beautiful than any of the others. They declared that it was impossible to find this mysterious land by direct search; it was only to be met with by accident, and a tantalising feature of San Borondon, as it was called, was that a storm invariably arose to drive away the ship as soon as it had taken in water. Relying on the testimony of these sailors, supported as they were by several members of the priestly profession, who had espied it from other islands, this ocean will-o'-the-wisp was duly registered as the property of the Spanish Crown. Expeditions were sent to make an organised search for it, and a geographer of the period even went so far as to assign it a place on his map.

There is no longer any mystery attaching to this romance of the sea, but whether the islands were once joined to the mainland, as the sand and camels of Lanzerote and Fuerteventura would seem to indicate; whether they are the result of a comparatively recent volcanic outburst, and not yet more than half risen; whether their original inhabitants were an indigenous race, or of African descent, how and why they obtained the name 'Canary,' and similar perplexing questions, have ever succeeded in baffling the philosophic mind. A more than usually large stock of preposterous theories to account for the last two enigmas was turned out by the

inventive genius of the historians of the Canary Isles. Birds, dogs, and sugar-canes were suggested as possible clues to the origin of the name; and the long-suffering patriarch Noah was called upon, as usual, to produce two children, Crano and Crana, unknown to Scripture, who made their way to Canary, and peopled it with their descendants. This idea seemed so brilliant that subsequent writers stood as sponsors to a whole crop of other sons, whose progeny selected the remaining islands of the group. But, however they came there, and no matter whose descendants they were, there is no room for doubt that the people of Grand Canary and Teneriffe, who were with such difficulty wiped out by the colonising power of Spain, were a singularly brave, happy, and in many ways *attractive* race, whose cruel fate it is impossible not to regret. Uncivilised in the sense that they had only clubs, javelins, and obsidian axes to oppose to the mail-coats and weapons of the Spanish, they were quite unacquainted with the science of treachery, and knew no better than to be generous when they held the upper hand; they appear to have led, previous to the appearance of their conquerors, a simple and contented existence, in spite of the intensely feudal principles which regulated their society. A pleasing feature of their code, and one which shows how superior they were to the generality of barbaric races, was the honourable position accorded to women, disrespect to whom, either by word or deed, was criminal. How little scope was afforded to the gilded youth of Grand Canary, may be judged from the fact that it was a punishable offence for any one to speak to a woman he did not know. The athletic training undergone by these islanders was worthy of Sparta's best traditions. As soon as they were able to stand, the art of self-defence was acquired under a brisk fire of balls of earth, hurled by their parents and relations; later on in life, stones and arrows took the place of these, and to such a pitch of perfection did some of them arrive, that the Spaniards were bewildered at seeing their agile foes catching bolts from their crossbows in their hands.

Canarians were to be seen in Spain after the Conquest who would allow men to throw stones or oranges at them, which they caught and threw back at the original thrower with unerring accuracy. Fancy what bowling and fielding we might have seen if the Spaniards had not exterminated these extraordinary athletes! High jumps of seven or eight feet are recorded, and those who care to believe this may also swallow

the report that giants, from fourteen to twenty-two feet in height with sixty or seventy teeth, were once found in the islands.

To Bethencourt, a Spanish adventurer, belongs the honour of having inaugurated the wave of conquest which was to sweep over the Canaries in the fifteenth century. He acquired Lanzerote, Fuerteventura, Gomera, and Hierro without much difficulty, but both Bethencourt and others who visited Grand Canary about this time, found the shrewd blows and vigorous defensive measures of these wretched islanders so little to their taste, that they were left severely alone for some forty years. In 1478 a serious effort was made to subdue them; but six years of hard fighting elapsed before the Spaniards could claim the victory, and not until thousands who had won fame in European warfare had died under the stones and clubs of their heroic opponents.

The Guanches of Teneriffe, who, like the Canarians, had enjoyed a temporary respite from the conquerors' attentions owing to their reputation for valour, were tackled in 1494 by Alonzo de Lugo. Landing where Santa Cruz now stands, he advanced boldly against the forces of Bencomo, king of Teneriffe. A crushing defeat was inflicted on him, and he returned even more rapidly to his camp, while the Guanches collected in great force at Laguna, on the heights above Santa Cruz, where they stayed, for some unaccountable reason, certainly not lack of courage, neglecting to follow up and put an end to their disorganised antagonists. While dallying here, a terrible pestilence fell upon them, aud destroyed them by thousands; and thus enfeebled, de Lugo, inspirited by hearing from an old woman the reason of the strange quietness which had spread over the enemy's encampment, attacked them, and this time turned the tables. In a few months more Bencomo, to avoid useless slaughter, surrendered his kingdom, and the struggle was at an end. The only relieving feature of this mournful tragedy was the romantic episode which led to the marriage of Dacil, Bencomo's daughter, with Castillo, one of de Lugo's captains. A soothsayer told her that her husband was to come from across the seas, and when the Spaniards landed, she haunted the woods above their camp, where Castillo found her, while reconnoitring, and fell an easy victim to her charms. How, being unacquainted with each other's language, they came to so rapid an understanding, history does not relate; but the

Spaniard is naturally such a master of the art of gesticulation that perhaps he was able more easily to dispense with words than could an Englishman under similar circumstances. Thus conquered, the Canaries have ever since remained in the hands of the Spaniards. It is a wonder they were never taken from her during the frequent wars of the last century, but although in these days of big guns and long ranges, both Las Palmas and Santa Cruz would fall an easy prey to a powerful battleship, the heavy surf and the valour of their inhabitants have always proved sufficient to repel any attacks made upon them.

Drake himself in 1585 had to leave Gomera without obtaining the supply of wine which he had promised his men, and an attempt to capture Las Palmas last century was easily repulsed. Even Nelson had to retire baffled, when, in 1797, he tried to seize Santa Cruz, where a Spanish treasure-ship was lying. He succeeded in reaching the mole, but was met with so determined a resistance that he was soon obliged to retreat with the loss of an arm and many of his men. The marvellous cannon-shot, worthy of Baron Munchausen himself, which is said to have taken off Nelson's arm, killed Captain Bowen, wounded another captain, and then dealt death to a score of sailors, is immortalised, as indeed such a triumph of marksmanship deserves to be, in Spanish verse.

Trowbridge had meanwhile made his way with three hundred and fifty men to the Plaza, in the middle of the town, where he had arranged to meet Nelson. In spite of the fact that he was directly under the guns of the Castle, and surrounded on all sides by superior forces, he tried to work a desperate 'bluff' on the Spaniards, and threatened to burn down the town unless they instantly surrendered. Finding that this menace did not intimidate them, he magnanimously promised to go away without doing any damage if they would give him the treasure-ship. Even this did not satisfy them, however, and he was eventually obliged to capitulate, whereupon he was allowed to march back and rejoin the fleet. The flags captured by the Spanish on this occasion are treasured in the cathedral of Santa Cruz, and every English visitor is dragged off to see them as soon as he sets foot on the island. A few years ago they were re-taken single-handed by a midshipman from the Training Squadron, and safely smuggled on board; but such buccaneering exploits are not appreciated in these hum-drum days, and they were restored to the enraged with profuse apologies.

Las Palmas and Santa Cruz are both free ports, and animated by an intense jealousy of each other. Las Palmas has the best harbour at present, but Santa Cruz is building a large mole in answer to the one which has conferred this advantage on its rival. The industry of their inhabitants is centred in the production of bananas and tomatoes, which are consumed chiefly in England. Before 1860, the prosperity of the islands, then engaged in growing cochineal, was remarkable; but the discovery of aniline dyes spelt ruin to that trade, and poverty stared them in the face till some one suggested the fruit-growing capabilities of the islands. Desperately poor the majority of the people still are, and labour is very cheap; but so is tobacco, and with plenty of cigarettes and a supply of gofia—the dried maize, which, made into a sort of porridge, is the universal food of the poorer classes—the Spanish labourer is quite content. Plantations of prickly pear, on which cochineal is reared, are still to be seen here and there, presenting a curious appearance, from the linen bags which are necessary to prevent the insects from falling off the plants. Want of water is the curse of the Canaries, and hence that elaborate system of irrigation and terraces which is so marked a characteristic of the landscape. Parts of the Canaries are very beautiful, especially up among the hills; but owing to the scarcity of woodland, the number of dismal hills—or rather gigantic heaps of volcanic rock and ashes, upon which nothing will grow but the pale-green spikes of the poisonous euphorbia, and the absolute barrenness of large tracts of uncultivated land—it cannot be said that the scenery of these islands deserves the indiscriminate praise which is sometimes showered upon them. Teneriffe is more attractive in this respect than Canary, for the latter has nothing to equal the lovely vale of Orotava, nestling under the majestic peak, which was declared by Humboldt to be the finest in the world. The Peak, with its glittering snow-cap and smooth outlines, looks as peaceful a mountain as could be found anywhere! but it has never failed to break into eruption at intervals of about a century, and, as the last outbreak took place in 1798, the next performance of the kind may possibly be witnessed by the present generation.

A curious feature of both islands is the number of small caves with which some of the hills are honeycombed. These are used, if at all accessible, as dwelling-places by the poorer classes, and though a hole in the earth, however commodious, does not sound

promising as a residence, there is no such thing as damp in this superb climate, nor is the cave-dweller haunted by the fear of rent-day or the collector of rates and taxes. At Atalaza, in Canary, there is a regular colony of troglodytes, numbering some two thousand, who live on equal terms with their pigs and donkeys, and dispense with such luxuries of civilisation as priests, marriage-laws, etc. These barbarians, for such they undoubtedly are, though of Spanish blood, vary the monotony of manufacturing a rude sort of pottery with no tools but their hands, by turning out *en masse* to demand money from visitors whom curiosity has impelled to visit their settlement. Atalaza is the head-quarters of these sturdy vagrants, but the whole island swarms with beggars, all possessed of the usual idea that English people have inexhaustible riches, which it is their one ambition to get rid of as quickly as possible.

Another peculiar place in Canary is the bone-yard, or cemetery, where graves, or rather niches for coffins, can only be retained on payment of a rent. Should this not be forthcoming, the bones of the occupant are unceremoniously thrown into the middle of the yard to make room for some one whose relations will pay regularly!

Both Canary and Teneriffe enjoy exceptional advantages as health-resorts during the winter months for invalids and delicate people. There are fairly good hotels, and the only drawback is that it is difficult to find any light amusement to vary the programme of drives and picnics which the hotels rely upon almost entirely to entertain visitors. The climate is superb, the air dry, and the temperature never indulges in the freaks which make English winter so extremely dangerous to those who are in weak health.

CLIFFORD HAY.

OURSELVES AS BETTERS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF A 'GIRL'S DIFFICULTIES.'

'He only who forgets to hoard has learnt to live.'

IN these days of wandering and speedy intercommunication, many a woman finds herself struggling with what she thinks of as new responsibilities. In times not far behind us, the majority of such women would have lived in selfish or in saintly isolation. They now, either as members of some organisation for promoting more or less spiritual work, or by the force of circumstances, personally discover that their principles have to be tested in quite different ways from those that hitherto they have thought becoming. 'I should loathe myself if I thought I could improve other people,' once wrote a woman who apparently did not realise that she was doing a great deal for their improvement; nor could she have foreseen that in less than a year she would have been responding magnificently to the call to raise the standard of her fellow-workers in a way which certainly belied her former words, in action though not in spirit.

A little girl was once asked, 'Who are your betters?' She answered, 'Pretty nearly everybody.' There comes a time when 'everybody' must act as if she were a better to somebody. If there were another word for this relationship one would be glad to find it, but it is very difficult to do so—almost as difficult as to respond to the call it implies.

This call may come early; it may come late; it may come often; it may come very seldom; it may come through recognised channels of influence; it may be the result of one great resolve, or of many small circumstances; but unselfishly, tenderly, firmly, humbly, the better *must* take it 'at the flood;' for—

'Where we disavow
Being Keeper to our brother, we're his Cain.'

And yet, over and over again, willing to excuse ourselves

from fulfilling the law of love, how ready we are to repudiate our neighbourhood to our social equals, or to think that the energy with which, perhaps, we fulfil outward duties fills up all spaces in the lives of those who, as we know, look to us as being in some way bound to take the lead! 'After twenty years of bricks and mortar, cannot we have a little soul-work?' was once the bitter cry of an earnest worker—perhaps too despondent, but indeed longing that more personal ministrations, zealous restoration of fabrics, might go hand-in-hand within a certain not neglected parish.

It is 'soul-work' for which some people are looking everywhere. It is the same thing under many names in all parts of Christendom. Where people treat others, even by a wistful look, as their betters, in some degree the call is made. And yet, as has been said, it does come to people in such very strange ways, and sometimes it does seem to imply—not only 'powers that we dread,' but influence to which we have no right. But the whole keynote here is: God gives power which we may use or abuse. And He specially gives our women power to deal with their fellow-women.

Let us try at first to look at it quite generally, as it applies, to all workers. The better has never crowned *herself* as such. She may be of any age, grade, school, position; the highly-trained middle-aged worker; the prettiest girl in the little set of tennis players; the quickest wit amongst the factory hands; or, in all these and many more spheres, she may be nothing at all noticeable; but, somehow, she will have disciples, and she will have to know it in some way. Amongst younger workers—and to take an example, which, owing to her lamented death, can be given—Miss Eleanor Benson seems to have been specially endowed with this power. In the brief memoir of her, prefixed to her posthumous story, her brother says: 'She became aware, though without any elation, of a character that was so single-minded in its enthusiasm, so strong in its principles, and so intensely loving and tender in its friendships, that others came to lean on it for support.' Imperfect literature as is her novel, it is most suggestive to any who have come face to face with what she calls the 'nudity of a soul.' Some will remember also 'The Ferriers' which appeared in the 'Monthly Packet' about 1884. It, to a few, with all its crudeness, conveyed what others did not understand, as they said, in the story or in real life; it showed what an immense difference there is between those who

face and those who do not face the depths of life in themselves and in other people.

The reason why some people do face such depths is simply that they feel every Christian soul represents to others some portion of the Manifested Life of the Son of God, to which it is united, and that by each Christian mind is shown to others some Power of the Holy Spirit of God. In the Life and in the Power, as members one of another, we are used as God's tools—sometimes, and most happily perhaps, without knowing it. It was once said as encouragement to a very shy speaker: 'It is only out of your inner life that you will touch the inner life of others.' So the comfort comes and the trouble goes with 'real' people.

There is the whole limitation of any personal work. We cannot touch others with what is unreal. It may be our lot to have our work tried by fire, and from unconscious unreality it may perish, though we be saved; but there is no safety in known sham. Conscious unreality in exercising influence may be transiently successful, or may provoke imitation or simulation, what you will: it cannot fail to do us deadly harm.

'Once a year,' says George Herbert, 'a man may say, on his conscience.' It is certainly not when he is with others, but in the times when the centres of personal consecration have to be fixed, before we 'go forth to bless.' Then it must be said. For to be a better simply means that, at some one moment of exercising influence in the things in which all are *equal* before God, this person for the love of God knows and shows His Will to that one who for some reason does not see it quite so well at the time. May not this definition then cover the ground of our title and limit it, as we try to trace out what may in some instances be made of the rightful relationships? Generally it is that most spiritual relations between women begin with personal appreciation. Whether socially or in any form of work the acquaintance broaden, it is when the call comes—or should come—that the better's trials begin. There is first a test of prudence, then of courage. Of prudence, because the attempt to win notice from a superior may be a mere desire to gratify curiosity or vanity, or to see what a 'good' woman is like; or it may proceed from the hunger which we must feed. Of courage, because many a woman who would perhaps stand a public test shrinks from the private question, not merely that of impertinence, but that of real need. She is afraid of it. It is stated

by one of the biographers of S. Francis of Assisi that his power lay in his absolute sincerity with individuals. 'Do you believe in God?' is a question which it never may be so hard to answer as when put by a young girl belonging to our own class, with scant reverence, as she criticises and fidgets with our pet possessions. 'I want to know, you see,' she explains, 'because I don't know what to think!' Surely, however crude the demand, response must be given in word or deed, with shyness it may be, but not with shame. The next step (even where belonging to any organisation implies a right and a duty to proceed) may be to take no next step—to wait with all reverence for the Holy Spirit's working in the chaos indicated by the question. On the other hand, wisdom may point to seizing the opportunity by talk, followed by correspondence. But once the challenge has been made, or if circumstances have otherwise given the better the right and she thinks it wise to take the first step, she must notice observantly what has made the girl what she is—heredity or bringing up, and present sphere and scope. However, let the better be quite sure that, in her turn, she is being judged with a severity of which only an admirer is capable!

Very likely, with a girl, any establishment of spiritual relationship means hero-worship, not to be accepted as a personal tribute such as makes associate or teacher glad that the girls 'won't have any one else,' but to be taken with kindness and affection, if possible, and to be used. When religion is first touched upon there will probably be abrupt questions, bald statement of what is not felt to be sin, but an act told as something at which the better ought to be shocked; then, bit by bit, will emerge the acknowledgment of a wish to be 'good' somehow, but with reserves: 'I could *never* not be angry at—' or 'I couldn't give up so and so;' points to be remembered but not then contested in their unconscious revelation of the besetting sin.

There is a deeper matter in our thoughts now. We know that even in the case of the baptised, with whom I suppose most of us will oftenest deal, there are those who neither as doctrine nor as practice have known or realised the obligations and privileges of their Membership of Christ. It is a question whether we are dealing with one who needs altogether to turn and to set her face Godward, or whether the soul only requires the stimulant which will make it ask, 'What lack I yet?'

We said before that we have been thinking of such relations

as may come to us any day. Of course some are made for us, and, as workers in any spiritual union, I venture to think we ought to aim at making others. I believe that reaction from what seemed impertinence in past days, and the influence of the severer schools of both parts of the Oxford movement, have made us too reticent, whilst reticence seems to those who look up to us to be want of religious conviction.

Let us suppose, then, that, by work in an organisation or by some more personal means, the two souls have come into the touch with each other when all is forgotten but their fellowship before God; and that the so-called better, feeling her responsibility, would now use it. Supposing the relationship has arisen from family circumstances, from parochial or social links, there will be little tests of sincerity ready to hand. If the two be in the G.F.S. they are specially fortunate in this. But every wise teacher will require some practical, measurable result from any zealous expression of a desire to be better; the obedient doing of some little simple thing, almost invariably more than a sluggish, less than an active girl would like, any obedience whose difficulty merely rests on perseverance, will do more towards teaching weakness than any number of exhortations. We know what wise men and women have said, and we know how we fail—we betters!—when God tests our emotions by His commands, and how the failures are things through which our deepest teaching comes; so we cannot go far astray here in requiring doings. We may hurt a soul frightfully by forcing it to artificial feelings.

For the rest, there is much chance of making mistakes, and there is very little human help that we shall ever get, even from our betters, and very little that we dare safely seek. It is possible that those whom we would like to consult do not understand this point, or themselves may be as shy to us as we are to our girls, or for ourselves, degrading as it seems, it may not be safe even to ask advice upon advice, and we ourselves may need the discipline of silence to all but God and those whom we serve. If help from experienced friends or books come in our way, we may feel sure it was meant for us; we will endeavour to get all we can, to know more of human nature by self-improvement, by seizing all opportunities of knowing what others are doing, by learning for ourselves more of God, and so work our way out. We can neither estimate our difficulties nor our helps beforehand. But on the human side there is an obvious

trial of tact common to all advisers, which has frankly to be faced. The better must know more about the girl she helps than if she had no relations with her, and, though older women can give and take advice on generalities, in dealing with those who have to find and root out elementary marked faults, we often need to be very definite indeed. Yet we must not only say, but feel; 'I don't want to know what makes you lose your temper over and over again: you and I have only to remark that you *did*.' Of course, we shall sometimes have to say, 'I'm afraid I can't help knowing this, but both you and I must not talk about it.' Certainly the obvious disqualification for any adviser is curiosity. But curious people do not get voluntary confidences as do those who are *detached* and sympathetic. Wise advisers live down untruths said of them. The only danger is where unsuitable women are placed in official relations which they abuse, and in them the harm of curiosity and loquacity cannot be over-rated. One other word relating to the affairs of common-sense may be added: is there not often a lack of dignity running through relations worthy of our deepest respect, most obviously seen and, for example, most inoffensively noticed, in the illustration of the small child lolling on her teacher's shoulder in lesson time? At the same time the love of others is a real gift:

'Love is a present for a mighty King,'

and tenderness is no sign of weakness. It is, perhaps, because upon both sides it is so little realised that there can be any dangers, in accepting or rejecting affection in such relations, that so many trials occur in their management. I firmly believe that where it is obvious the affection or interest must be unequal, on both sides, it is far better for the superior gently to say so if it needs to be said, and then to accept the greater love, which in other cases she would wish to give without adequate return.

In many cases there will be no crises, which is the normal and most comfortable state of things. The demand for help at the moment is met—that is all. Or as a matter of continuity—very little help and encouragement only is needed—as it must be needed by all from some source. No real spiritual life of which any record is available has been independent of ministration from angels known or unawares. So here (especially in official relations, the outcome say of the G.F.S. rules and objects), with so many girls there will be just the faithful and humble exercise of personal influence, of which the greater and better part is unconscious, as we know by the effect of our betters upon

ourselves. It is what they are, not what they say nor even what they do, which helps to keep us sincere or enthusiastic. It is so when we live with or otherwise influence others. As regards example, probably with girls it is best to let them see what they will of our practice, but not to encourage them to follow too closely what to them might be still unreal, though it would come later if they were 'made that way.' If not, best not. However, it is not safe to suppose that a girl may comprehend or not comprehend any point of spiritual life, and she will nearly always need some definite help in devotional matters. With those to whom Christian faith and Catholic teaching have been familiar, we may find most important points unrealised: in those to whom they have never been explained there may be such receptive soil that the new growth will be as real as it is rapid. But with all, it is well to remember what once was wisely said: 'Do leave some of the teaching in the hands of God.'

Yet we may well also be mindful that our cultivation and other possessions do endow us with the power of watering the growing seed. It is a great mistake not to give a girl who uses her head something to think about and to learn in the things of God. It is almost certain that we shall do well, if with all respect for shyness (ours will be greater than hers after the first plunge, very likely!)—with reverence for her as our equal (here in prayer *nobody counts for more than one!*) we help the girl to some simple rule of life, withdrawing our personal influence as soon and as imperceptibly as we can, so that she will stand alone, so far as we are concerned. It may be for a time a very great help to her to know that we care about her prayers, but she will have to learn to pray for herself. The recommendation of suitable books is an immense boon to us all. There will be more difficult cases scattered amongst the every-day ones, but these will probably come, by natural laws, to those who cannot need such words as these, though they may best understand the subject. Intellectual difficulties in a girl's case do not often mean much which will not yield to personal influence to the question, 'You don't suppose there have been no clever Christians, do you?' With a girl one may very well direct one's powers to the unsettlement of unsettling, and to the cultivation of veneration. But patience is needful, and an 'unshockable mind,' which will let the girl talk out, after which usually she will be satisfied. If not, unless the better is specially gifted, she had better get further help from those who are. A confidence will often be a

trial to a better; it may bore, it may perplex her, and she must neither shirk it nor force it, as a rule. But there are cases, in which the confidence, that is to say, where it is practically a confession, may well be helped on, as the only way to clear the ground. It may be that something of a course of deception, of absolute sin or of definite misdoing is known to the better, or it may press on her charge's soul. With a social equal, perhaps by humbling herself to give a confidence, or in some way or another, she will contrive that the story shall be told, if the telling seems needful. In most cases, no question should be asked till the tale is complete; but by a woman with a girl surely look and touch will lighten the task, and, if needful, in the case of a marked culprit, it is helped by a few words spoken in a very quiet and business-like tone; such as, 'Tell me or don't tell me, just as you like, but be *quite* true about it, dear,' or as, 'How often?' 'Did any one suffer from it?' 'Why did you think you did it?' Fortitude and acuteness must be called into play, or in alleviating pain we may turn the spirit of penance into that of pose—in the reactionary relief felt by the proudest after acknowledgment. It is most difficult in the case of many girls to encourage without making too much of the mere confession; which will be a real test of sincerity with some, and absolutely sufficient penance, so to speak, and to others such a relief that it is no punishment, and punishment, if needful or if possible, as a matter of self-help, would have to be suggested to the girl willing to take it. Judgment again—in such cases direct comment, with encouragement and possibly suggestion of penalty and repayment—must be deferred or given at once, according to the girl's nature; imaginative, nervous people are really hurt, stolid natures favourably worked upon, by delay. The adviser herself may want time to think in serious and unsuspected cases. If so, she must at least strive to leave an impression that will not upset the course of the girl's daily duties. If earthly comfort be perilous, heavenly consolation will never be out of place: the suggestion of a simple bit of devotion for the evening prayer, and perhaps a prayer then, will best close a trying interview. At no time will the better more need to watch herself than after such a strain on her sympathy. Before her will lie, too, the decision of the treatment of the case as such, according as to whether in certain cases it is one in which she ought or ought not to keep in her own hands.

It is quite certain that great caution should be exercised

here, if the adviser's own experience has, in either direction, created a bias in her own mind as to the meaning of the Exhortation to Communicants. One who has heard many confessions writes that 'a girl may, and sometimes must, go to Confession for Absolution, and yet may be far better "dealt with" by the common sense of a loving woman.' There are cases in which the optional use of confession would seem almost obligatory to some churchwomen, though they would not be in danger of confusing its object with that of direction. They too, even more than others, must seek to avoid the evils of attempting with their charges a 'direction' as to which they know that experienced spiritual guides are on their guard. In no usual circumstances should confession be suggested lightly to those really under authority, and, in any case (where it is the practice of the household or congregation, as it may be in these days), a wise woman will endeavour to be sensible in dealing with girls. It may specially be said here—many will get useful advice from Miss Yonge's 'Preparation for Prayer-book Lessons,' or from 'Womankind.' Women can help women and girls very greatly in all these ways, and, in many things, it is, for all purposes, a real work of mercy where those in touch with spiritual agencies can either repress unreality, or furnish little practical hints, or, where needful, create a means of communication. For lack of links there is so much disconnected life in the Church of England: as elsewhere, of course; but we know where we fail, and own it frankly.

In cases where a girl or woman is not in touch with the clergy, it may be the duty of a more happily situated churchwoman to help her to get some church teaching, especially if locally this is inaccessible. The girl may never have been baptized, confirmed, nor a communicant. Here we are on common ground, but not on much 'easier going.' Discoveries of this sort may be made where an adviser may not be able to ascertain the force of opposition. It is not always more than quite bearable, if occasionally unfair, snubs, to which a girl may be exposed upon becoming more in earnest! In other cases, where a better decides that a girl is in her charge because under the rule of agnostic or careless authorities, it is well that she can take advantage of some social cover for her guns, though such a girl ought not to be neglected because she is well off!

Girls who are able to get the right sort of teaching will so rarely come for more than talks, to which no wise authority

could object, that in the cases (equally of the early independent working girl or of the ignorant upper-class girl) where more is wanted, the girl's wish for it may be a real call. In such instances when Christianity or churchmanship will separate a girl's mind from those around her, both adviser and advised will be tried to the uttermost in things of common sense and of religion: 'Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's.' It must be remembered, too, that the faults of good people—even in dress and manner—make families object to their girls being 'good!'

So let the adviser abstain from giving legitimate causes of complaint, whether to the good or to the bad surroundings of any girl, and indeed, as all are unwise, especially girls in their own circles, it may be part of the elected better's duty to do some anticipatory work, and to tell a girl how not to create friction by always quoting the woman she admires, and especially by not misquoting her. On the other hand, the careless breaking of promises, or the infliction of injustice, or lack of courtesy, or the upsetting of trust, may do harm even when it is not at all intended. A little patience in inquiring into grievances may help a girl very much, either by showing her as a useful lesson that she is mistaken, or, if partly right, that she has to be merciful as well as just even to her superiors. There is scarcely any one to whom the receiving of an apology is harmful, and many to whom it is beneficial, when it is an act of grace, distinctly proceeding out of recognition for the law to which all are subject. There are things in this connection which betters, because they are betters, should do or leave undone, though, as an educated girl said, in all good faith, and using the very word, 'As X. is my better, I know *she* has a right to be rude!'

Yet, perhaps, as much in dealing with such girls as with the poor little outcasts, or the more difficult penitents, when we are forced to fall back upon first principles, no one has a right to be rude, even in thought. It was a hard saying that was uttered by the late Archbishop of Canterbury on one occasion: 'Contempt is impossible for a Christian.'

For, after all, we never are betters, and it is upon that consideration we fall back to temper successes and failures. We shall not always be able to help others, and even if we have done so, the help may be outgrown when we have learnt to like to give it. It may be that another will take our place one day. It may be that quickened sympathies will lead to true and equal

union; it may be that always differences, as of the stars that differ in glory, will prevent adviser and advised from ever being equally matched, though they may be 'duly paired.' Pain will come. Failure may come. Ingratitude may be real or apparent. Few true workers do not seem to have experienced the sensation of absolute defeat. The Scriptures are full of utterances of those whose feet have well-nigh slipped; for above their fellows those who were susceptible to revelation from God were sensitive to roughness from man. In such dark hours there may be none to help, or one who has been helped, by his light will rekindle that of the adviser of a few years back. God knows what the result will be of those relations with others in the spiritual life—from which we dare not shrink, when we know we ought to feel—(as a saint in a vision seemed to hear) that our Lord has said: '*I will that this soul love Me, therefore I have inclined it to love thee.*'

G. M. IRELAND BLACKBURNE.

THE MAIN CHANCE.

BY CHRISTABEL R. COLERIDGE, AUTHOR OF 'WAYNFLETE,' 'THE TENDER MERCIES OF THE GOOD,' 'THE PROPHET'S MANTLE,' ETC.

PROLOGUE.

'SO ONE FIGHT MORE.'

I TAKE up the story on a windy, sunny summer day, in the ninth decade of the nineteenth century, on a rough upland road, with wide brown moors above it, and narrow steep-edged dales below.

Then and there it seems best to begin the history of a hard fight with fortune, of a little section of our modern struggle for life.

But stories do not begin when they focus themselves in the eye of the story-teller; they are conditioned by forces which have worked in the past, and which work on into the present.

When James II. was king, a Yorkshire gentleman of good fortune and repute became involved in the rebellion of the Duke of Monmouth. When that rebellion was crushed out, while his fellow conspirators were paying away their substance in fines, pining in gaol, or laying their heads on the block, he was riding home over Kirkover Moor, and through Flete Dale, with his head on his shoulders and money in his pocket.

He had turned king's evidence, had sold useful information, had betrayed the friend of his youth to save his own life and his own estate, and so came home to his wife and his sons with a whole skin and fortune, not only unimpaired, but added to, by a merciful and grateful sovereign.

But before he came to his own hall door, before he forded the noisy rushing stream that ran through the dale, he turned and fled as if the foes to whom he had sold his honour from fear of death and greed of gain, or the devil who had tempted him, blocked his way. Up hill and down dale, over moor and moss, through wood and field, he rode himself to death. His body

was found in the river Flete, and his soul—— Well, the story went, as such stories often go, that his soul was doomed to ride for ever, and that when the fierce moorland winds drove through the oaks and the beeches of Flete Edge, the noise of his mad gallop might be heard, echoing through the dale and round the old house which he had bought with so bitter a price. It was believed that his trembling form slunk through the lands which he had preferred to his honour, and that his haggard face and evil eyes met, now and again, the scared eyes of his descendants, and struck into their hearts the legacy which he had left to them.

Be this as it may, a century was hardly over before hard drinking and evil living ruined the Waynfletes of Flete Dale. The old hall and the lands round it passed into the hands of an unscrupulous attorney, the last squire blew his brains out, and his heir, who by a certain course of action might have saved the estate, passed the critical moment drunk at a wayside inn, and came back too late, to die in fits of delirious terror, and to whisper another reason for his delay.

Flete Dale knew the Waynfletes no more for three generations.

But at last, by the courage and good fortune of the granddaughter of the last Waynflete squire, the old estate was bought back. No fiend stood in her way when she came home to the house of her fathers, and no cowardice baffled, no treachery stained the splendid perseverance which had brought her there. She turned the luck. The young man, who had now for nearly two years held the place and position which she had regained for him, was also a person of tenacious purpose and vigorous will, with a heart to cling to his own, and a hand to hold it tight. He had met—and passed—that 'Dweller on the Threshold,' before whom his forefathers had quailed. What still remained for him to do after the threshold was crossed, and the inheritance regained, these pages will endeavour, as well as they may, to tell.

CHAPTER I.

'EYES AND NO EYES.'

MAXWELL MERVYN was sitting on a low stone wall, surveying his landed property. Behind him great moors, still green and brown with early summer tints, raised their wide sweeping

outlines against a cool grey sky. Before him green fields fell steeply down towards a rushing stream, which marked its course by flowering elder bushes, while on its other side plantations of oak and larch rose nearly to the ridge of the low opposite hill. Southwards the view lost itself in murk and mist, though here on the moor the air blew clear and cold—very cold for the middle of June. A single line of rails ran along the side of the valley, and the signal-box of a small roadside station gleamed in the intermittent sunlight. Just below it were heaps of slag and rubbish, traces of the presence of used-up coal-pits. The place was wild, picturesque, and lonely; but the smoke of commerce was within sight, the line of rails ran straight away to great centres of population, and the crow of the grouse was answered by the shriek of the engines.

Maxwell Mervyn was a clerk in a London insurance office. He knew Brighton, Boulogne, and Ostend; but he had never seen any place like this northern hill-country. Moreover, his moderate salary had hitherto provided him with a lodging in another person's house in the Uxbridge Road. To sit on his own wall and dangle his feet into his own field was a sensation so new that it was hardly, so to speak, in working order. He felt nearly as impassive as he looked. He was a small, sturdy young man, with square brows and a square chin, thick dark hair, and round, cheerful eyes. He looked thoroughly healthy, and in good condition, as if football and cycling had borne a proper proportion to indoor occupations, and his expression was sensible and resolute, showing him to be fully capable of managing his own affairs. If the cloth with which fortune had supplied him had not been of the finest quality, and had left no quantity to spare, he had evidently managed to cut his coat according to it, and had not wasted his energies on vain regrets.

But now! He looked steadily over the fields at his feet for some minutes, then, lifting his neat umbrella, deftly struck off the heads of some tall fronds of bracken which grew up beside him. Something began to stir in his blood like wine, and a spark came into his dark eyes.

'There's something in it!' he said, half aloud. 'Those are *my* ferns. That's *my* tree over there in the corner; it's an oak. Good business!'

He gave himself a shake, and, taking some papers out of

his pocket, began to study and to verify by his own observation the facts which had been supplied to him about his new inheritance.

There were some memoranda, a rough map, and a short pedigree, at which the young man grinned a little as he ran his finger along its branches; then he took the map, and began to compare it with the landscape before him.

'Here, then,' he thought, 'is the Ouseley estate, all along this side of the valley, close up to Kirk-Hinton station. That's mine. Beyond that hill must be Waynflete, which belonged once to an ancient Maxwell, an attorney. I never knew that Uncle Robert Palmer's "bit of land" had once been Maxwell property, and I never should have suspected him of being romantic enough to leave it to me because I come of that lot. Indeed, though I knew my grandmother's name was Maxwell, I certainly didn't care. Let me see.'

He studied the pedigree till every ramification of it was clear in his head; then he turned again to the map, and identified every field and plantation marked upon it. Then he read the lawyer's letter, which had informed him of his recent inheritance from a scarcely known great-uncle, and mastered every detail of its statements.

'There's no mistake about the money,' he thought, smiling. 'That's the best part of the business; but I wonder if the proper amount is got out of this landed property? Does it do much more than pay its own expenses? People find coal in these parts, and make fortunes. "Buy a field and scratch a hole in it." I remember Uncle Palmer saying that, the only time I ever saw him. There's been a coal-pit there.'

After another careful survey of the valley, the young man swung himself over the wall, and turned his face towards the moor. The road by which he had come from Kirk-Hinton station stretched, a rough, white track, across its shoulder. The keen air smelt of peat and heather, great cloud shadows swept over the brown surface, and gleams of light caught the young green of the bilberries, and the waving white of the cotton-grass. Here and there were black hollows, and beyond, to the north, shadowy hill outlines which seemed to die away in endless space.

If Maxwell Mervyn had come as a chance spectator to look at Kirk Moor, he would have set it down as a dreary bit of scenery, and have thought no more about it; but when he knew

that he possessed certain rights over that rough, sloping hillside, rights of shooting and fishing that reached to the undulating sky-line above his head, the novelty of the idea was borne in upon his not very impressionable imagination. His eyes opened wider and softened a little.

'A fellow might get to like it,' he thought; and then, turning quickly to the practical side of the matter, 'Some thousands, and a piece of unremunerative land won't do instead of a profession at my time of life. But it might set a man to work on another level, in a more profitable way. Office work and ten pounds a year increase up to £350 don't offer unlimited possibilities in life. I'm worth more than that. The Palmers all made their money up here in the woollen trade, and a good pot-full of it too.'

The windy uplands, the wide cloud-crossed sky, were full of suggestion to him. Chance, change, more grist to his mill, and much quicker turns of the grindstone. This legacy should produce something more than a superior bicycle, better lodgings, a smarter tailor, and longer holiday trips. It should give his brains more work, and find more use for his energies. His brains had served him well hitherto in keeping him out of mischief. He could depend upon them. This keen north-country wind filled him with energy; and he knew that he had never had half enough to do, nor half enough reward for doing it.

Worldly success may not be an elevated or elevating object in life, but his desire for it was his only approach to an aspiration. It was, perhaps, not quite commonplace not to be entirely satisfied with his cheerful commonplace life. It said something that the first thought of so young a man should be for more work, and not for more amusement; and much more that, after five years of self-dependence, his past still left his future free, and made no entangling claims upon it.

As he looked once more towards the shoulder of the hill, a small dark outline appeared against the sky, which, coming slowly down the road, revealed itself as a young man dressed in brown tweed, and riding a bay horse. He dismounted as he came near to where Maxwell Mervyn was sitting, led his horse a few paces, and then paused, lifting up its near hind foot and searching for a stone in the shoe.

Mervyn did not understand horses, and, perhaps wisely, sat still, without offering any assistance. He was not even knowing

enough to speculate on the value of the animal; but he perceived that the rider wore well-cut clothes, and looked like a gentleman. In a minute a little rough grey dog trotted up from behind, and seeing the figure sitting on the wall, began to bark furiously, showing the strongest objection to allow a stranger to walk on roads which he regarded as his own property. His master turned and called him to order, upon which he wagged his tail and made apologies.

'It's all bark, he won't bite;' said his owner, looking round with a smile, and speaking in a soft voice with an accent, or rather intonation, unfamiliar to the Londoner.

'He seems to know a stranger,' said Mervyn, civilly. 'Can you tell me where the road goes to over the hill there?'

'To Kirkover Farm first, and then on to Ouselwell village, five miles or so over the moor.'

'Is there an old lady of the name of Maxwell living in Ouselwell?'

'Yes. Then perhaps I have the pleasure of speaking to Mr. Maxwell Mervyn?' and as Mervyn assented, pleased to find himself of importance enough to be recognised, he added, 'My name's Waynflete. Very glad to make your acquaintance. I suppose you have come down to have a look at the Ouseley property? Where are you staying?'

'At Rilston. But, as Miss Maxwell's relation, I thought of going over to see her. Can I get any sort of conveyance here?'

'You can at Kirkover. They have a trap there which you can hire. I think you are related also to some friends of mine, the Stauntons?'

'Yes, I believe we're cousins. I've been at their house.'

'Well,' said Mr. Waynflete, who had by this time extracted a stone from his horse's shoe, and was preparing to remount, 'I shall be glad to see something more of you. Could you look in on me at Ingleby Mills to-morrow? Will you dine and sleep in bachelor quarters? We are about an hour by rail from Rilston.'

Maxwell Mervyn gave a willing assent. He was pleased, as probably his new acquaintance intended he should be; and, as he shook hands and watched Mr. Waynflete mount his horse after a few more words and directions as to the way to Kirkover, he noticed him keenly.

'Well-dressed man. Good figure. Odd look about his eyes,

somehow. Under thirty, I should say. Doesn't look quite like a man about town. I shall get a chance of picking his brains to-morrow. I remember the Stauntons saying that they had friends up in these parts. Well, now perhaps Vi——'

Maxwell Mervyn's reflections here lost the definiteness by which they were usually distinguished.

He watched Mr. Waynflete ride away down the road until he turned out of sight. He was not accustomed to roads so unfrequented that the eye could follow one figure for all their length.

'It makes one notice a man, somehow, and feel as if there was something peculiar about him,' he thought, as he went up the hill to Kirkover Farm, which presently appeared over the ridge, a substantial house of yellowish stone, standing in small fields enclosed from the moor by the low stone walls of the country.

It did not occur to the Londoner to notice that the oats were backward, or the hay crops scanty, or to observe the black faces of the little mountain sheep. People, however observant, do not see facts for which they have not been trained to look out. It did not strike him that the tall, weather-beaten woman who answered his summons, though she admitted the existence of the trap, showed the most entire indifference as to whether he hired it or not, and the most unflattering surprise at finding that he needed a driver; he had given Mr. Waynflete's name as an introduction.

'Happen we can spare a laddie,' she said, after a minute of indifferent, unsmiling silence.

'I can't drive,' said the Londoner, with total disregard of her opinion, adding to himself, 'and I'm not going to make a fool of myself by trying.' Maxwell Mervyn never saw himself reflected in other people's opinion of him, and he never ventured on unsafe ground: he knew the extent of his own capacities.

A very small boy, with a bleached head and brown face, presently brought out a shabby old dog-cart with a fine young horse in it, and they were soon driving at a good pace over the moor.

Young Mervyn enjoyed the drive, and observed that the road would have been rough for a bicycle. This was more obvious to him than the details of the scenery as they wound upwards along the edge of the moor, till his driver pointed his whip downwards and said—

'Yon's Flete Dale.'

Maxwell Mervyn looked down into a deep and narrow valley dissected, like all the country side, by low stone walls into odd and angular divisions. Plantations of oak, in various stages of growth, clothed part of the descent, at the bottom of which another shallow stony river rushed noisily by. A few scattered cottages stood here and there on the steep hillsides, the grey tower of a little church appeared above the young green of the oak woods, and high on the opposite hill was a large, rambling house standing alone in a recently cleared space, with some tall trees beside it.

'Waynflete Hall, I suppose?' said Maxwell, in an intelligent manner. 'It belongs, doesn't it, to Mr. Waynflete, of Ingleby Mills?'

'T' mills belong to Waynfletes,' said the lad.

'Ah yes, I thought so,' said Maxwell, not perceiving the reversal of his statement.

'Yon's Flete brig,' said the boy again, pointing to a stone bridge over the river. He looked sideways at the south country ignoramus beside him out of a very sharp pair of eyes.

'T' owd gen'leman used to walk there.'

'Indeed? What old gentleman? An old Mr. Waynflete?'

'Ay, t' owd Guy.'

'Mr. Waynflete's father, perhaps? He is dead now, I suppose?'

'Ou, ay, he's dead. He walked, Guy—he laid 'un. He thrawed 'un into t' watter and built yon brig.'

Maxwell Mervyn pricked up his ears. A 'spook' so near a manufacturing centre!

'And who was old Guy?' he said with interest.

'Eh, he's one on 'em.'

'And so you believe in a ghost walking? What do they think of that at the board school, eh?'

'I never axed 'em,' said the lad, grinning, and whipping up his horse.

'Oh, but you don't believe in such a tale as that?' said Maxwell.

'Eh, it's a tale they tell you; but maybe they're lee-ars,' said the lad, again grinning.

And no more could be extracted from him, until the windy, stony street of Ouselwell village came into view.

Maxwell Mervyn had not gone the right way to work to hear the story.

CHAPTER II.

'I WAIT FOR MY STORY.'

KATIE FIELDING, the little governess at Ingleby vicarage, was sitting on the step of a stile between the garden and a long green field. A high hedge of dog-rose and honeysuckle scented the evening air. Here and there hedgerow elms stood up tall and shady, a straight path went back to the house edged with common free-growing flowers, behind which were apple trees and vegetables. The place was pleasant and homelike, though its present inhabitants had only lived there for a few months. When Katie's own early home was broken up, and she was transferred to her friends' household, she took root in the family and called their vicarage home. She had left 'home' in Hampshire with them, to come to Ingleby. She helped Mrs. Lennox in house and parish 'like a daughter,' and her discontents and aspirations were no different and not much greater than if she had been indeed a daughter of the house.

For those pretty restless blue eyes were full of wishes, those rosy soft lips could pout and quiver with dissatisfaction. It was an innocent face without a shadow of external stain upon it, but too full of emotional possibilities, and too empty of intellectual or moral attainment to look contented.

But that morning she had had a delightful and unexpected surprise. It was long since she had seen her old playfellow, Maxwell Mervyn; if she had stayed in Hampshire she might never have seen him again. At the end of the schoolroom tales, which had formed her chief literature, there was often a 'mystic hint' decorously veiled, of the marriage of the heroine with her childhood's friend. Ah, there never could be any one quite the same as 'Max' to her! How wonderful it had been to run up against him that morning in Ingleby High Street as he went to see Mr. Waynflete, and to hear that he had inherited a property in the neighbourhood!

And then there was 'Him!' He was not her childhood's friend, and did not fit into the same story with him. He was much more like the wicked heroes of the sensational novels which she had scarcely ever been allowed to read. But what did that matter? Who wants heroes and villains ready made who is of the kind that make? She did not need plots on

paper, she was weaving her own story from morning to night, and she never saw a young man without wondering if he was the 'not impossible he' who would complete it. Let those of us whose fancies at twenty never played them similar tricks, cast stones at her.

She did not think 'he' was exactly a good man. He never went to church. But then clever scientific men—and of course a certificated mining engineer, so well thought of as to be manager of Mr. Raby's collieries, and consulted on difficult questions by all the coal masters round, must be clever and scientific—men like that had to read all sorts of books written by infidels. If any one could but influence and convert him! He lived all alone in that little house up on the hill, and he looked so clever and dark, and his eyes—she wished she knew what colour his eyes were, but she never had felt able to look him in the face. Mr. Lennox had once brought him in to tea, and since, by the most extraordinary accidents she had met him twice. Besides, if you are only enough interested in a person it is astonishing how often his name occurs in conversation, and how many facts you can collect about him. There had been no young men at home, here there was at any rate one, who was not a curate—curates had lost something of their freshness for Katie—here was one young layman: Mr. Waynflete was young, but then he did not count, as he was engaged to be married, and a 'manufacturer,' which was not interesting.

'Katie, Katie, mother says that we may go for a walk through the fields, if you'll take us.'

Katie jumped up quite as ready for movement as the two long-haired and long-legged girls of twelve and fourteen who came rushing up to interrupt her meditations. She had her hat on and Laura had providently brought her gloves; so off the three set over the sunny fields, with the smutty grass brushing the edge of Katie's summer skirt.

The use of her Christian name in the family marked her friendly footing there, and she was on excellent terms with her scholars. What she taught them was another matter. They crossed three or four fields till they came to the bank of the river Ingle, a fine rapidly flowing stream fed by the Flete and other moorland becks; but which at Ingleby was itself merged in a canal alongside of which ran a towing path. A bridge crossed the canal at the point of junction, the ground between the streams of water was fresh and green, though banks and mud

were black with coal dust. Mr. Raby's pits were a mile or two away, up towards the hill country, and his barges came down the canal and supplied the mills on its banks. The levelling sun and the dim atmosphere cast a sort of glamour over the tall chimneys, the ugly buildings, the heaps of refuse, which disfigured the valley, and strong and cheering air blew down from the hills.

The three girls turned up the towing path towards the collieries, Laura and Lily leaning upon Katie's arms; they were nearly as tall as she was. She was telling them a story. There was nothing so interesting in print. The hero, a young man of indomitable spirit was utterly crushed by his misfortunes, which were certainly crushing. He had lost friends, fortune, and future, when he heard a voice saying—

'Hey, lasses, look ahead!'

Their feet tripped in the rope of a barge coming to meet them. Lily fell forward, Laura backwards, and Katie, with a loud scream and start back from the rough grinning face of the towing man, slipped over the bank and up to her waist in mud that had once been coal dust.

'Hey, my lass, thou's looking arter t' lads 'stead o' tha' own feet!' said the bargee with sarcasm; but as he moved slowly to the rescue a young man ran past him down the bank, stretched out his hand, and catching Katie's, dragged her not without a good stiff pull out of the clinging mud and set her safe on the bank again. The two girls had picked themselves up dry and unhurt, and the rescuer said politely—

'I hope you're none the worse, but the mud's rather treacherous.'

And Katie having left one shoe and her hat in the canal, and covered her dress with black mud, with her rough brown hair all over her shoulders and waves of crimson chasing the pallor of fright from her face, perceived that she had been rescued from this travesty of an adventure by 'Him!'

Between the two kinds of shock she found herself crying.

'It's the Miss Lennoxes, isn't it?' said her rescuer, looking at the children. 'Will you come into my house, which is close by, and let my housekeeper find your sister dry things or send for her own?'

'Oh no! no!' faltered Katie, 'I'll run home.'

'You can't, Katie, without your shoe; and you're in such a state,' said Laura. 'We'd much better stop.'

'We could run and fetch your things while you stop at Mr. Wickham's,' said Lily. But the older Laura shook her head at her, and took the matter into her own hands. She was a well-bred sensible child with a plain face.

'We're much obliged, Mr. Wickham ; it's our governess, Miss Fielding, and I'm sure mother would like her to get dry.'

'Then come and let me show you the way, and I can send for what Miss Fielding wants.'

He walked on with Laura ; and Katie, feeling as if she could never hold up her head again, followed with Lily. In tears, covered with mud, and with her hair flying in every direction, what must 'he' think of her!

He was thinking, if she had only known it, as he hurried on to one of the ugly little square brick houses which Ingleby folk erected in preference to semi-detached villas, that the vicarage governess was an uncommonly pretty little girl.

He called 'Mrs. Cass,' and a comfortable-looking body appeared with many exclamations of pity, and then as she took possession of Miss Fielding, he said that he would go and explain matters at the Vicarage and fetch dry things. His bicycle would take him there in five minutes.

Indeed, Katie had not much more than time to get clean and dry and to do up her hair before Lily saw him coming back, and ran out to fetch the brown paper parcel which he had managed to bring on his bicycle.

When Katie reappeared in the little sitting-room attired in the serge skirt and Tam o' Shanter which had been selected as taking least room, and blushing more than ever, she found a fire lighted and the master of the house supplying Laura and Lily with tea and bread and honey. Mr. Wickham pressed her to drink some tea before she went home, and she sat on the edge of her chair, unable to say anything but 'yes' and 'no,' but taking notes out of the corners of her eyes with all the interest of discovery. There were numbers of books and writing things—just what she expected, and a strong smell of smoke. Why, of course, 'he' would smoke and read in the evening. There were autotypes of old masters on the wall, not so much 'of course,' if Katie had only known anything about them ; but she thought that they looked red and odd and ugly, not knowing that their owner was thinking that the poise of her head as she glanced over her shoulder, and the outline of her little nose recalled one of the 'oddest.' Over the mantelpiece was a man's

head in outline, with the double smile and inscrutable eyes that should have suggested but one artist.

'That's a Leonardo,' said Mr. Wickham, following her eyes. 'You care for art, Miss Fielding?'

'Oh yes. How pretty!' said Katie, with effusion.

'You sketch, no doubt?' said Mr. Wickham.

'Oh no; at least, I am trying. I do flowers. But we must go now. We're very much obliged for your kindness, but——'

Katie's sense of the unconventionality of the circumstances was as apparent as her blushes. She might be excused for feeling it unendurably intensified when, having at length got herself and the children outside the door, and decided that she ought to shake hands with Mr. Wickham, she beheld approaching Maxwell Mervyn and Mr. Waynflete. She gave a great jump, and gasped out, 'Oh, Max!' while the straightforward Laura saved the situation by exclaiming—

'Oh, Mr. Waynflete, a horrid man frightened us, and Katie fell into the canal, and Mr. Wickham pulled her out, and we have been having tea.'

'A man frightened you? How?' said Guy Waynflete, with the quick attention of a local J.P., while Maxwell Mervyn said something about knowing Miss Fielding at home, and being 'old friends.'

'Oh, it was nothing; he only called out because we didn't see him,' said Laura, while Katie added in explanation—

'He did not mean to frighten us; but, you see, we are used to the agricultural poor, who are so much nicer.'

'He called out,' began Lily; but Katie hushed her up vehemently, and finally got herself away with more blushes, and a deplorable want of social presence of mind.

Nothing so dreadful had ever happened to her before, but dreadful things were sometimes rather delightful.

CHAPTER III.

THE MAIN CHANCE.

'I SUPPOSE,' said Maxwell Mervyn, 'that there's a hatful of money to be made down in these parts?'

This remark was offered after the object of their call had been made known to Wickham, namely, that Max should on the next

morning be shown one of the coal-pits, and after they had accepted their host's offer to come in and have a smoke.

Young Mervyn, accustomed to be hail-fellow-well-met with many youths of his own sort, and feeling himself, moreover, to be a man about town in the country, was intentionally making himself agreeable, and at the same time taking notes for his own benefit. His fresh-coloured, cheerful face, sturdy limbs, and square, sensible forehead contrasted with Wickham's long lean figure, sallow face, and features which Max described to himself as 'Jewy,' and still more with the pale, slender Guy Waynflete, whose fair hair, high cheek-bones, and marked, though delicate outlines, showed his northern blood.

'All sorts of fellows make fortunes, I suppose?' said Mervyn with interest.

'Some sorts of fellows lose them,' said Wickham.

'The hat's pretty well empty, I think,' said Guy.

'Oh, why, I understood from my uncle Robert that a man had only to put his heart into his business—give it plenty of elbow grease, he said—to get on.'

'Well,' said Guy, 'he had a good eye for the main chance himself.'

'I believe you,' said Max, with youthful importance, and an experienced air. 'After all, that *is* the main thing, only every one won't own to it. It's all very well to *say* you don't care for your own interests, but I never met a man that didn't. Should say he wouldn't get on among the chimneys.'

He formulated this sentiment as if it had never been uttered before. Perhaps, stirred by change, he had suddenly found out its force; perhaps he was adapting himself to the men of business in whose company he found himself.

'I always look to the main chance, whenever it heaves in sight,' said Wickham.

'Certainly,' said Guy, and paused a little; 'if one knows which chance *is* the main one.'

'Main chances are never there when they're wanted,' said Wickham.

'That's what you sharp men of business have to find out,' said Max. 'That's how you turn the money in your pockets. Now, I consider I ought to look out for the best chance for myself down here; I never had much chance before, but I'm not going to make ducks and drakes of my money.'

He was several years younger than the other men, but he was

not in the least abashed by them. He was genuinely taken up with his own affairs, and, moreover, unconsciously, he was much excited by them.

'Very wise,' said Wickham. 'Have you any notion on the point—that is, of course, speaking generally?'

'Oh, we're all friends, I suppose?' said Max. 'Why, don't you see, I never had anything before but £10 increase and a bonus or so to look forward to. I stuck to my work, and I knew how to get good times besides—first-rate times, I assure you—jolly as they make 'em. But now—now, don't you see, if old Uncle Bob Palmer made all that money down here, I don't see why I shouldn't roll it up a bit bigger. Capital makes all the difference. You're a capitalist, Mr. Waynflete, so you'll see that.'

'I ought to be,' said Guy. 'It's supposed that we all are.'

'Well, then,' continued the boy, eagerly, 'I felt—when I was sitting upon that wall, looking at my place, where you saw me yesterday, it came to me—what a difference the money made to me. I'm not the same chap as I was last week. I've got an opening, a chance, and, by Jove, I'll take it! Why, men have turned their hundred thousands who began with less.'

There was a kind of intoxication of hopefulness in his air, as if new forces were really stirring in his blood.

'No, I'm not going to run risks,' he went on. 'But I suppose I might invest my capital in a good business—buy a partnership. Or if there should chance to be any coal in Ouseley land, that might be worth scratching up.'

'You must sink capital as well as a shaft,' said Wickham, 'before you strike coal, or oil either.'

'Yes. That's your subject, isn't it?' said Max. 'I've seen Mr. Waynflete's mills, and now I want to understand all about coal-pits.'

'Well, I'll take you down at eleven to-morrow,' said Wickham. 'You're pleased with this part of the country, I gather?'

'Yes. Of course, it's not London—no place is—but I like it. Very curious old place, Ouselwell, where I went to see my old cousin. Nice old lady; posted me up in all the family affairs. I passed *your* property, Mr. Waynflete. By the way, the boy who drove me told me a queer story—ghosts and all that sort of thing. The old lady thought I had better not mention it; but I don't suppose you go in for psychical rot, so it won't signify.'

'There's a story,' said Guy Waynflete, imperturbably, 'but I

don't suppose you would hear the same version of it from any two people.'

'No; that's what I say. Some friends of mine go in for *planchette*, and that style of thing. I took hold, and the pencil never wrote a word.'

'That I can well believe,' said Wickham.

'Stick to what you know about, and then you won't be far wrong,' said Max; 'and don't trouble about what doesn't concern you. When *I* see a ghost, then I'll believe in him.'

'I shouldn't go as far as that myself,' said Wickham; while Guy Waynflete smiled, and said after a minute—

'Who told you the story?'

'The boy who drove me to Ouselwell. He said one of your ancestors "walked," and that you threw him into the river; but Miss Maxwell said you were only nearly drowned.'

'That last was so,' said Guy, adding, 'The bridge was rotten.'

'Natives,' said Wickham, 'have endeavoured to play upon my credulity with similar legends. There is a very dramatic myth which concerns Mr. Maxwell's forefathers also.'

'The old lady wouldn't tell me about that. I asked her if it was our ancestor's ghost, and she said "No; the Maxwells were not an old county family like the Waynfletes—they came of respectable people." Thought she believed that county families preserved ghosts like pheasants,' said Max.

'Well, we won't begin our acquaintance by perpetuating the story,' said Guy, smiling. 'It doesn't do our forbears credit. We should be getting back to dinner, Mervyn. Especially as perhaps you'd like to stop at the Vicarage and call on Miss Fielding, as she is an old friend; and I have to speak to the Vicar.'

'Yes. Well, we were little trots together. There wasn't any notion then of her being a governess, you know; her father was a beneficed clergyman. He died, and they had losses. My people visited them.'

'Then, suppose we come,' said Guy. 'Mervyn will be at the pit by eleven to-morrow, Wickham. I am afraid I must be looking after the shop.'

'The main chance!' said Wickham. 'All right; will you look me up later?'

Guy agreed, and conducted his guest across the fields to Ingleby Vicarage. Max remarked that Wickham seemed a clever sort of chap, and, before the walk was over, had learned

everything that Guy could tell him of the position, qualifications, and earnings of a mining engineer. Guy explained that besides his regular post at the Raby Collieries, Wickham, though he had only been a few months in the district, was often consulted, as an expert, on questions connected with the working of coal seams. He was really a scientific man, and an authority on his own subjects.

'Then he'd know if there was still coal in Ouseley?'

'There is; but I doubt the seam being worth working,' said Guy.

'You mean that there isn't enough?'

'Well, yes; and about there the streak of coal is thin. There's often a drop in the seam too deep for a shaft to be worth sinking. I dare say Wickham will explain it to you to-morrow.'

'Yes; I want to understand it.'

'Wanting to understand' was the distinctive note of Maxwell Mervyn, and as his entertainer soon perceived, he knew what understanding meant. He passed nothing by which came into the range of his vision.

Mrs. Lennox, who was a kindly woman, received him cordially.

Katie, in a clean frock, blushed like a rose, and, self-conscious as she was, her feeling for Max was so simple that her manner was simple too, and her exceeding prettiness shone out conspicuously among the plain Lennoxes.

Mr. Lennox sounded Mr. Waynflete on the condition and appearance of the church, and found him sympathetic, but cautious and slow to commit himself. He had soon discovered that no one in Ingleby would move without 'Mr. Guy,' and that this slight, silent young man had, spite of northern independence and democratic forms of speech, more of his own way than the autocratic squire of his former agricultural village.

'Has Ouseley got a church?' demanded Max, as they went away.

'No; it's in Kirkover parish. The church is a long way off—very ruinous old place.'

'Church isn't much in my line,' said Max, cheerfully. 'I generally took a spin on Sunday morning. That wouldn't do, I suppose, in the country? Proper to subscribe to the church, isn't it?'

'Well, you see, Mr. Lennox thinks so.'

'Oh yes; the parson, of course. I never looked into these things. A man doesn't want much church to be a decent sort

of chap. A man can do that for himself if he's worth his salt.'

'Perhaps, if his fathers were worth their salt before him. I think if I were you, I'd subscribe to the bicycle club at Kirkover —there's a capital one there—unless I wished to subscribe to the church.'

'Oh, but there's example,' said Max, solemnly—'example; and, of course, Liberal views wouldn't go down in the country. I shouldn't like to be unpopular. I don't humbug about it. Of course, I don't set up for being pious, but still I'd do the proper thing. It wouldn't pay at all to go against people's prejudices. Still, I've read a thing or two; so have you, I dare say.'

'"Ye have read, ye have heard, ye have thought,"' muttered Guy. He suddenly looked full at Max with his peculiar light grey eyes, and said, 'The bicycle club isn't a bad thing to keep fellows decent. Go in for it, if you're ever in Kirkover. Here we are, however; that is my garden gate, and that's the dinner-bell.'

Max thought that he had established an excellent understanding with his host; but as he went to bed a doubt flashed over him.

'I'm not sure that I quite made Waynflete out,' he thought. 'I've a great mind to ask Wickham what his views are. It wouldn't do to give him offence.'

And with this frank avowal to himself of adapting his views to his company, Max went to sleep with a good conscience. He felt that he had made an excellent impression on his host, especially when, as they parted in the afternoon after the visit to the coal-pit, Guy remarked that he was going to run up to town soon, and they might perhaps meet at the Stauntons.

CHAPTER IV.

NO ADMITTANCE.

'WHAT do you think of that lad?' asked Guy Waynflete, as he sat in Jasper Wickham's little room on the evening after Max Mervyn had left him. 'He's rather a bounder, but don't you think there's stuff in him?'

'Yes. He knows how to ask a question,' said Wickham; 'but he's in a very cocksure, jolly—bank-holiday phase at present.'

Guy laughed.

'I think he's got grit,' he said. 'I rather think of offering him the chance of getting a little experience. He might come and work at the mill for a while, and see what business is like. There is more work than I can manage without my brother.'

'Your brother married just before I came here, didn't he?'

'Yes; one of the Palmers, a nephew of old Thomas, my great-aunt's husband, from whom she inherited this business, made a big fortune over in the Bradford district, and invested some of it in a sheep-station in Queensland for one of his sons, who died. The old man died himself last winter, and left the Queensland property to my brother, of whom he was very fond. Godfrey never liked business much, and fancied going out there —indeed, he's just the man for it. He wanted to marry, and his wife is an adventurous person, and liked the notion also. So we came to a proper understanding, and they sailed directly after the wedding. My young woman, as perhaps you know, is Godfrey's wife's sister. We hope to be married next spring. But I miss Godfrey, of course, considerably.'

'Naturally. Where does young Mervyn's connection with the Palmers come in? I hardly understand yours, either.'

'When you have been here awhile longer, you'll know that every one is connected with the Palmers, except the Rabys. My great-aunt, Margaret Waynflete, in the reduced state of the family, worked in old Thomas's mills. He married her, made her a partner, and left everything to her. She bought Waynflete back, and resumed her own name. Old Bob Palmer was another brother; his daughter married a Mervyn. He was always very civil to me, and, moreover, this lad, on his mother's side, is connected with my great friend Staunton, so I shall be glad to help him on a bit. It isn't every young fellow who would know so well what he wanted, or want anything but to knock about in London.'

'It's a curious chance,' said Wickham, 'that he should come back to this neighbourhood, from which his forbears apparently came.'

'Yes,' said Guy. 'It's quite true,' he added, 'that his forbears ousted mine from Waynflete; I suppose they, too, had an eye to the main chance.'

'Yes, that's curious too. Whatever one may or may not believe in, heredity is a good square fact. That,' he added, laughing, 'is perhaps "one of the things one might have expressed differently," for I don't expect him to oust you.'

'I don't think this lad is a scoundrel,' said Guy; 'in fact, I am sure he is honest.'

'May he keep so,' said Wickham, 'if he wants to make a fortune!'

'Well,' said Guy, 'I don't believe old Tom Palmer, my great-aunt's husband, was given to sharp practice. It's not in our traditions. But, of course, his sight was shorter than ours, and the conditions simpler and much more direct. We have got to learn to be honest scientifically under new, or, at any rate, newly recognised, conditions of supply and demand.'

'Exactly,' said Wickham. 'Scientific honesty might have perplexed our grandfathers. That's a very good expression.'

He was watching Guy while he stuffed tobacco into his pipe, and caught just a glance upwards under the latter's long eyelashes that showed him that he could not do so unobserved.

'Is Mervyn's land of any value?' he asked indifferently.

'Well, very little. Moorland farming is a poor look-out. There was a little coal "scratched up," as he said, both on Ouseley land and at Lady Well, which is a piece of the Waynflete estate, but it came to nothing. It's only a tradition.'

'Like the ghosts,' said Wickham. 'I do go in for "psychical rot" a little, purely from curiosity. You hunt a fancy, but you find odd facts—like the grapes which came when the man dug his vineyard for gold.'

'There are no ghosts at Waynflete,' said Guy, with a sudden roughness, which was perhaps one of the 'facts' which interested his companion.

'No? Only old wives' tales. You don't care for the subject? I dare say you regard it all as humbug. Well, I don't. I like to hunt it down; and I've a good deal of "occult" literature in that cupboard.'

'I don't think it's profitable,' said Guy, bluntly.

'Well, I think there are many curious physical facts at the bottom of it. Hypnotism and its outcomes have much fascination, but it is difficult to make any progress in such lines of inquiry. If I could find any one—you, for instance—with a similar turn, we might experiment in leisure moments.'

'Do you think you can always tell where that sort of thing leads?' said Guy.

'Nowhere with the majority; but I believe you and I might get some results. Of course, you know, I regard it purely as a

brand of physical science; just as much as geology. Everything is, I consider——'

'Hypnotism is,' said Guy.

'Certainly. No, we should not get at the "something after death," for the good reason that, as I think, there's nothing there. But we might find out why people think there is.'

'No, we should not,' said Guy, looking full at him. 'No man can by searching find out God.'

Then Wickham perceived that his companion's few short sentences had been positive statements, not queries or speculations; that he knew, or thought he knew, what he was talking about.

'I'm quite ready to agree to that much,' he said, not quite sure what tone to take.

'People say,' said Guy, 'that Shakespeare was careless when he made Hamlet doubt of a future state *after* he had seen the ghost. I thought so once myself. But Shakespeare knew better. As Christ did, "Neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead."'

'But that amounts pretty much to what I said, doesn't it?' said Wickham, genuinely surprised and puzzled.

'No,' said Guy, and stopped. 'I will not try experiments,' he added after a moment; 'but I should rather like to hear what you think is the result of experiment.'

Wickham unlocked the cupboard in the wall, of which he had spoken, and showed a row of books. Guy looked along it.

'I haven't seen that,' he said, pointing to a recent publication.

'Take it, then; we can talk it over afterwards.'

'Thanks,' said Guy in his ordinary slow tones, as he took the book. Then he turned round and looked again at his companion, this time with rather a mocking smile. 'I shall find out if you try experiments without telling me,' he said.

'You knew already I had some hypnotic power?'

'Yes,' said Guy, rather reluctantly, 'I did. What is that picture?' he added, looking at the drawing over the mantelpiece. 'It's new, isn't it?'

'Newly framed. It's one of a set of Leonardo drawings. Forcible face, I think. By the way, you are a little like it.'

'Yes, I am,' said Guy. 'It has evil possibilities in it. I don't like it. Good night. I've some work to do this evening.'

Left alone, Jasper Wickham recalled the conversation with keen interest.

'I always knew he was a queer fellow,' he thought. 'By Jove!

I believe he's a fine subject for study. Is he studying me? He's shrewd, too, and can keep his own counsel. May be turning his thousands for all I know, or he mayn't. And so he knew I could hypnotize? I shall find out what he does know, for no one with a turn that way can keep off the subject.'

Jasper Wickham had had a hard fight with fortune; he had been since boyhood in a hard school and among strange comrades. He had learned his profession in places where his hand had often had to keep his head, and where he had always had to use his wits to put bread in his mouth. He was a man with a shady record, with debts and claims which fretted and galled him; but he had begun life with a heavy handicap, and the sins of others made even more trouble for him than his own. His present position was the best he had ever occupied, though he was well-born and had had a good early education. He had been well received by his employer, Mr. Raby, and by Guy Waynflete. The former he thoroughly understood, the latter puzzled him. He liked him, and found life much pleasanter for his company; but there was nothing in his nature to prevent him from using a person he liked for his own ends.

This conversation was the first which had ever gone beyond commonplaces, and it had surprised him. He thought it over, and on the next evening that he was free, went down to the Mill House, where Guy Waynflete, since his brother had left him, lived alone.

Part of the house, which was handsome and rather gloomy, was shut up; the study, which Guy chiefly used, looked over a large but somewhat dingy garden. It was full of books, pamphlets, and papers, and was enlivened by a cheery fire, by the presence of the little dog, Rawdie, who occupied the rug, and by some lovely flower-paintings, which smiled out among mahogany book-cases and inartistic, though expensive engravings, with charming suggestions of colour, light, and fragrance. On the writing-table there was a photograph of a tender-faced girl, looking straight out of the picture with happy, steady eyes.

Guy shut up the long lines of figures on which he was engaged, and greeted his visitor just as he had greeted him a dozen times before.

Wickham stood in the open window, looking out at the tawny murky sunset in which chimneys and factories were lost to sight.

'Waynflete,' he said deliberately, 'I don't want you to think me a superstitious fool or a lunatic, on the one hand, or a highly developed psychic on the other, according as you choose to put it. I consider all experiences of that kind to be explicable by natural laws, but that the natural laws are worth scientific study. It's my hobby, and life's intolerable without one for a lonely dog like me.'

'Did you ever see a ghost?' said Guy—'that is to say, did you ever have an experience of which the natural law required study?'

'No,' said Wickham, 'I wish I could. It would be very instructive.'

'It would. How should you explain one if you heard of it?'

'Well, if it wasn't a lie, it might, of course, be due to brain or eye disease—or suggestion?'

'Whose?' said Guy.

'Ah, there you touch all the point in dispute. That's what we want to discover,' said Wickham, eagerly. 'Can an ancestral brain-impression be transmitted? Or a notion be impressed on any one by surrounding influences, or by the will of another? Or is the snark a "boojum," after all; and does nothing ever happen except by fraud and fancy? I see nothing unscientific in studying these points.'

'No,' said Guy, 'if you find such a hobby refreshing.'

'I do. You see I regard it from just as impersonal and unprejudiced a standpoint as mineralogy or trigonometry. I don't want to prove or dispense with the existence of spirit or the being of God, because, as I said honestly, I regard those points as already settled in the negative. I don't want to prove anything except facts.'

'There's no other spirit of inquiry which would lead to fact,' said Guy. 'I should like to hear what facts you think you find very much. But, first, I'll say that I have had these questions of the being of God and of my own soul settled for me in the affirmative.'

He spoke gravely, but quite simply, giving full weight to the words, without the slightest shyness or conventionality.

Did he say so because he did not choose 'to give himself away' on the subject? Or had he never felt that it was questionable? Did his short sentences come from canny north country reserve, and did ignorance, or experience, lie behind them?

He took up the book that Wickham had lent him, and made two or three sharp criticisms on it, which were not those of a novice, and so saved his companion the need of a reply. As they discussed the possibilities of hypnotism, Wickham did not find that credulity was his host's most striking characteristic. Before they parted Guy said that he was going to London for a week, and should probably consult his friend Staunton as to the proposal he thought of making to young Mervyn. He would look Wickham up when he came back again.

When he was left alone he sat down by the fire, while his little dog jumped on his knee, and as he pulled the creature's long ears, and stroked and caressed him, he thought over the two foregoing conversations.

Between them he had made a decision, and resisted an impulse which had at first possessed him.

'No,' he thought to himself, 'I won't lock the cupboard. No one will know of the secret drawer. I will not shirk the subject. I dare not. I should do so because I was afraid! Nothing is terrible but fear.'

He sat still for some time, thinking; but his thoughts soon passed to subjects of alarm more tangible than any which Wickham was likely to suggest to him. His outlook was an anxious one, and his future was, except in one point, so uncertain, that he might well have been excused for fearing to face it. But his long meditation ended with a smile, even while he sighed.

'I must tell her how it is,' he thought, 'and I shall hear what she will say.'

CHAPTER V.

'SUN-KISSED.'

ON an afternoon of that same week in June, Florella Vyner, Guy Waynflete's promised wife, sat painting in a bright light room high up in a large block of new buildings overlooking the river Thames. The room was painted all over with a cool, grey-green tint, a deep blue drugget was on the floor, and bits of contrasting colour were here and there sparsely and reservedly introduced. There were books and ornaments, and many tokens of occupation, but yet the room had a look of space. There was but one bunch of flowers—old-fashioned pinks—on the table, and healthy flourishing plants of musk and mignonette

in the window-boxes. Outside was the shining river with its perspective of bridges, roofs, and towers. Florella wore a blue-grey gown, which fell harmoniously round the full, soft lines of her figure; her brow was broad and open, and her hazel eyes were both strong and sweet.

She drew back a little from her painting, and looked at it with quiet, unhurried intentness; she held her brush in a beautiful, capable hand.

Presently there was a summons at the door, and a visitor was announced—'Mr. Staunton.'

'Florella, I thought I'd take my chance. It is luck to find you at home, and alone.'

'I'm so glad to see you,' said Florella, warmly. 'I did not know you had come back. Sit down, and I will give you some coffee, quite as good as any you had in Italy.'

'Better, I make no doubt. I came back three days ago.'

'And you found "The Influence of Italy"?' said Florella, as she opened a cupboard and produced a quaint, brown coffee-pot and two little upright brown mugs.

'Oh yes, she had some share in the making of Spenser. I am going to make endless notes at the British Museum, and there is an idea that I shall go down to Ingleby this autumn to put them in shape. That is, if Guy is still alone then.'

'I'm afraid he will be,' said Florella, smiling and shaking her head. 'But I am going to Ingleby for a fortnight in August, for Guy has annexed Cousin Susan to entertain me.'

'That's good. Though why you cannot stay with Guy and me—without Cousin Susan——'

'I am afraid I can't; Cousin Susan thinks this arrangement here terribly modern and independent.'

'It's very charming,' said Cuthbert Staunton, looking round.

'Isn't it? You see Aunt Connie has been paying visits and travelling all the winter and spring, and I wanted head-quarters, so I asked Molly Edgell to set up with me here for the present. She's a journalist, you know; she is at her office now. But she'll have to get another partner, for Aunt Constance is really not well, and must go abroad this winter; and she wants me, as it will be the last time she can have me, so I am *very* glad you think of being at Ingleby.'

'Well,' said Cuthbert, 'but I wish *you* thought of being there too.'

'I did!' said Florella, laughing. 'But Guy didn't! Things

are difficult, of course,' she added gravely. 'I can talk to you, and I'm glad, because I want you to make Guy reasonable and good.'

'It is possible,' said Staunton, 'that *you* can make Guy reasonable; I won't promise impossibilities. But how are things "difficult" just now?'

The question was put with a shade of anxiety in Cuthbert Staunton's quiet, friendly voice. He was a man of thirty-four, with a pleasant brown-tinted face, itself so kind and so reasonable that he might well be expected to make reasonable views palatable to other people.

Florella went on brewing her coffee, and began to tell her story with perfect security of being understood. Her hearer knew that her words would represent uncoloured absolute facts.

'Well,' she said, 'first of all, you know Guy once hoped that we should make Waynflete our home, and that Godfrey and Constance would live at Ingleby.'

'It was a great wrench—the parting with Godfrey,' interposed Cuthbert.

'Yes, to both of them. But it was best; for Godfrey never put his brains into the business, he just followed Guy's lead blindly. *You* know what it was for Guy to undertake to run those mills with no money to fall back upon. The business had got into such low water, and the buildings so out of repair. When old Mrs. Waynflete got Waynflete back, she didn't know quite what she was doing. It wasn't only the money she paid for it, though, of course, otherwise there would have been more ready money for Guy and Godfrey. But she really could not afford to keep it up. Every year, you know, matters as to land get worse. There ought to be a great deal spent on it. And now my aunt has given up renting the house, I am afraid it won't let again. It's shabby, and dreadfully out of the way. There's no hunting, and hardly any grouse on Kirk Moor, and very poor shooting in Flete Dale; I don't see why a stranger should want to live there.'

'It's better than it used to be,' said Cuthbert.

'Yes, indeed,' she answered, with a thrill in her voice; 'No one knows how much better. And Guy loves it in his very bones, you know.'

'I know. If Godfrey would have sold the Queensland place and put the money into the business?'

'Ah, yes; if that had been what Godfrey wished! But he didn't wish it, and Guy resolved not to make him do it.'

Cuthbert knew quite well that the 'making' would have probably been within the compass of the elder brother's determination.

'You know,' she continued, 'Guy always said that he would wait two years before he married me, till after next October was over. Now, I think Aunt Connie, having been so ill, really wants me this winter, and Guy did wish to make everything nice for me first. But I shan't cost much—or, indeed, anything; and in the spring, why, *I* mean to marry *him*.'

'That's good,' said Cuthbert, as she looked at him with a laugh and a blush.

'You mustn't think,' she then said, very seriously—'you mustn't think that we consider all this anxiety and difficulty *hard*, or make a great trouble of it. Oh no, of course not. How could we? But it is a strain, and you and the "Faerie Queene" will be so good for Guy, that I'm rejoiced to think he will have you.'

'He's quite well, I hope?'

'Oh yes, very well, only so hard-worked. But I've turned on the tap of all our chief worries, and streamed them over you. It's too bad. Here is your coffee, and the newest cake of the season. Molly and I had some of our special chums to tea on Sunday. We didn't quite eat up all the cake.'

'And what is the last picture?'

Florella turned her easel round, so that the light fell on her painting. A group of flaming escholzias held up their heads against a summer sky, while above them two yellow butterflies were floating and playing.

'And you call it——?' said Cuthbert.

'Sun-kissed. Do you like it?'

'Yes. It's sunny. The butterflies are the spirits of the flowers.'

'That is very pretty. Now, look here. This is for Guy.'

'Rawdon Crawley, as wise as life! Capital! Fraudulent little beggar! I don't believe he knows *all* the secrets of the universe.'

'He knows a great deal,' said Florella, as she put aside her vigorous sketch of Guy's little rough dog. 'Now, this is for myself.'

This was a water-colour drawing of her lover, a shrewd

purposeful face, clean-cut and strong, with large light grey eyes set round with silky black lashes—eyes that were strange and dreamy, contradicting the rest of the countenance.

'Yes!' said Cuthbert, after a long look; and no praise could have more thoroughly expressed his satisfaction. 'Why don't you do more in the way of figures? As you say, you can *see* faces.'

'Why,' said Florella, 'I could not really do anything with portraits without a great deal more study than I shall ever have time for. But it's good to have a little change. I sketch the river and the sky, and I think I might do something with birds and very wee beasts.'

Cuthbert walked round the room and examined other sketches and drawings, mostly water-colour studies of flowers, suggestive and characteristic. Florella's pictures had souls; each showed the spirit of its flower subject.

She was a girl of many interests and of many friends; she had been intimate with Cuthbert Staunton and his sisters for years, and her life was full of the lives of other young women. She had puzzled over their difficulties and faced their troubles, opened her heart to their sorrows, and her mind to their thoughts. She gave herself out more fully to many than most people can do to one, and yet she stood a little apart from her friends. Perhaps this was from the fact of her marriage engagement and her settled future, even perhaps a little from her independent means. But those who knew her best felt that these reasons were not all. Though she was pretty and prosperous and happy, in the full swing of work and play, though she was hardly twenty-three years old, there were experiences in Florella's inmost soul that set her at a different standpoint from her fellows. Sometimes they felt that what they guessed, she knew.

It is not, perhaps, every girl who can be the friend of her lover's friend; but Florella was capable of it, perhaps because she was the friend of her lover himself.

That same evening her windows were open to the warm air of the London summer. The last sunset tints were mingling with the moonlight above the river. Gleaming lights along the banks showed alternate masses of heavy shadow. The noises of road and river were softened by height and distance, and overtopped by the murmur and chatter of young voices within.

Florella, her friend Molly Edgell, Cuthbert Staunton's sister Violet, and one or two other girls, were deep in a discussion.

'Cocoa and cogitation evenings' were the custom of their little circle, but the claims of the London season had thinned their ranks, and to-night the numbers were small. 'They rattled the fundamentals,' Cuthbert Staunton used to say maliciously, and in truth there is nothing that clever and 'viewy' young women like better than the discussion of insoluble problems; and, allowing for the fact that all questions have false or temporary bottoms on many levels, there are few things more advantageous to them.

To-night they had started with the old discussion on whether self-development is a human being's first duty; and Molly Edgell had observed trenchantly that she thought marriage put a final stopper on all development. Violet Staunton, who prided herself on wide, and as she liked to call them, 'human' views of life, remarked that she should have thought it gave the best opportunity for growth.

'Not at all,' said Molly, a keen-eyed, pale-faced young woman with eager manners. 'People stop themselves off in all sorts of directions at once. Look at Florella.'

On this occasion the debaters were few enough and intimate enough to be personal.

'I shouldn't have said that Florella was stunted,' said an elder Miss Staunton, quietly.

'Molly and I have been quarrelling for a week,' said Florella.

'It's just this,' said Molly, 'and it bears exactly on the subject. Florella is a very valuable person. She's intelligent, and, as a rule, unprejudiced, and yet she looks sweetly conventional, and conciliates conventional people. There's more stuff in her than to look at her you'd think, and she'll listen to everything and keep her hair on.'

'I do feel flattered,' interposed Florella.

'Also, her little remarks go to the heart of things. Then why —why should she refuse to enter on the investigation of facts which she owns are important? Why crush faculties of which she can't deny she has the germs? Why shut her eyes for fear she should find out that they can see?'

'Oh,' said Violet, 'this is the old story; Florella won't try *planchette*, nor automatic writing, nor play the willing game. She's quite right. On those lines you can develop nothing but lies and folly, and she knows it.'

'No,' said Florella, 'I never said that.'

'Oh no, she owns that she thinks the phenomena worth

investigating, but she has promised that she won't. Now, I call that stunting herself, and subjecting her soul to the will of another.'

'Does Mr. Waynflete think it wicked?' said a younger girl, who was watching Florella with adoring eyes.

'No,' said Florella.

'One must make allowance for prejudices,' said Molly; 'but I do not think any one has any right to submit their judgment to the judgment of another, however much they may be devoted to them. That is what makes tyrants and slaves and worthless people, for no one comes to their full worth except on the lines that nature intended for them.'

'Speech preparing for the Pioneers,' interjected Violet; but Florella said—

'That's true; but it takes some time to distinguish *all* the lines in one's spectrum, and still more to know which of them indicate one's main elements.'

'That sentence,' said Kitty Staunton, 'is so clever that it is thrown away on a meeting of only five. Especially as Vi and I are going to a party, and must say good night.'

After good nights had been exchanged, the admiring maiden whispering that Florella was developed enough for *her*, the two hostesses were left alone.

'I mean it—I mean it, Flo,' said Molly, eagerly. 'That line in your spectrum *is* clear and important, your head is strong, and you're good, and you're a lady, you'd never disgust any one, and you have the psychic temperament—you must know you have.'

'I suppose that is why Guy doesn't like me to play at it.'

'Just think of the awful importance of it, Flo; if it is only a development of human faculties along the lines which all science indicates, it's important enough; and if—if there's only a hint or a leading to be obtained from it, to answer the question of questions. If a voice from the unseen ever is heard, oh, surely such as you ought to listen for it! You have always fenced off the subject, but that isn't worthy of you.'

'If I fence,' said Florella, 'it is not because I am afraid, but because I do not know what to say. I will talk to you some day without any fencing. But I want to think it out clearly first.'

'Talking helps one to think,' said Molly. 'You want to talk to Mr. Waynflete about it.'

'I am not quite sure about that,' said Florella; 'and if you talk, Molly, you see, you can't listen.'

Florella talked well, chiefly because her talk was absolutely fearless. She did not hint a suggestion, or make false shots at a subject, half-hiding her interest in it. She never said more or less than she knew, and she and Molly, who were true friends, had seen strange faces together in the course of their discussions. But on this point of psychic phenomena Florella was reserved, and owned it.

She sat still, looking out on the moonlight river, with a look of 'listening' in her steady eyes.

Molly moved about rather noisily, lit a lamp, and sat down to write.

'You are afraid,' she flung back at Florella, 'of developing into a sphere where you would be alone, where Mr. Waynflete can't, or won't, follow you.'

'Oh no,' said Florella, with a soft little laugh; 'I am not in the very least afraid of that!'

(To be continued.)

FROM MY ATTIC WINDOW.

Concerning Unmethodical Souls. An Appreciation.

EVERY well-conducted person at the time of the New Year makes resolutions. But there are some of us not of this 'holy and elegant' band. The reason for this omission is of course perfectly obvious, namely that we are not all well-conducted persons, and we know that to make a resolution inevitably means that we shall break it on the earliest opportunity. Whereas there is just the faintest possibility that we may do the good thing, which our well-conducted friends have resolved to do, quite by accident. And then we have the double delight of doing, and surprise at waking, to find it done. These things I am writing in case, among the high-toned British public, there should be any unmethodical person who needs sympathy, fellow feeling, and appreciation. Everybody recognises of course that all the elevating things that have been written about those who make their 'I do' follow on the heels of 'I will' are perfectly true. It is so obviously the right thing to resolve on birthdays, or at New Year, that you will rise at an early hour every morning for the ensuing year. And nobly conscientious are those souls who succeed in living up to it—especially if to that virtue they add that of not being unpleasantly conscious of their virtue at the breakfast table. But to some badly arranged minds it would be fatal to make a resolution on the subject. We may very likely get up early quite a large proportion of our days, but it is always due to some accident, something unexpected, most of all to ourselves. We don't feel high-toned about it. We have no temptation to be 'high falutin' at breakfast. We know it is only an accident, and may never occur again. Whereas if it had happened in consequence of a resolution we should be unbearable.

It is the quiet, methodical people, of course, who keep the world going, those who can be depended on to be always at a certain place at a certain time. But to be quietly methodical to some folk is sheer impossibility, and perhaps, in their erratic way,

they too contribute something to the sum of the world's happiness. Carlyle is, I know, the most unfortunate of men to choose to illustrate this point, for, in addition to being the very apotheosis of erratic unstability, he was physically dyspeptic, and consequently mentally jaundiced. But a story of him, which was new to me, was told by Tennyson, and appears in his life. He says, 'Having heard that Henry Taylor was ill, Carlyle rushed off from London to Sheen with a bottle of medicine, which had done Mrs. Carlyle good, without in the least knowing what was ailing Henry Taylor, or for what the medicine was useful.' It is so obvious that a little common sense and forethought would have rendered his kindly concern doubly valuable. But I cannot help wondering whether his friend would not have lost for ever the thrill that must have gone through his heart, when blundering Thomas Carlyle arrived post-haste to bring a remedy that was of no use, but bringing also himself, the living witness of a sympathy and loving ties worth more than drugs. And so, perhaps, sometimes, impulsive blundering folk, with warm hearts, quick to sin and quick to repent, may have their uses in this world of calculation. And the wisdom of the serpent, or the despair of the crushed worm, has to come to most men with years. Alas!

* * * * * *

A Bishop on Dress. The Bishop of London is a keen reader of human nature, and a brave man to boot. He has been expounding the moral value of dress to a company largely composed of ladies. No one but a bishop would have ventured on ground so boggy, but since 'tis done, 'tis well done, and pity 'tis 'twere not done sooner, and more often. What the Bishop said was that the artistic side of charity was often passed over as of no consequence. Most excellent ladies visited the poor in garments that were in the first or last stage of dowdiness. They seemed to think that the poor would not notice that their bonnets were unbecoming and their jackets shabby. Whereas, as a matter of fact, no one was more susceptible to the small courtesies of life than the poor. 'Young women,' said the Bishop, 'put on your bonnets straight, and dress more carefully when you are going to visit poor than "smart" people.'

'Pretty ladies with big hats,' another experienced worker at the same meeting added, 'are the most successful collectors for our savings bank.'

* * * * * *

Elevating Dress. These are observations which tend to make reflections, as the philosopher said when he sat in a room surrounded by mirrors and looked at himself from many sides. It has often been a problem to me why a certain type of charitable worker always wears a severely plain black bonnet, chosen without any regard to her face, and put on in the most unbecoming manner possible; generally, but not universally, cotton (or is it taffeta?) gloves, and a cloth jacket which is certainly useful but nothing else. Of course there is a danger in the opposite direction, there is in all extremes. The flighty young thing who takes up district-visiting—she calls it slumming—because it is a novel way of temporarily driving away her *ennui*, illustrates the other extreme. She indulges in a hat which would be conspicuous for flightiness in Bond Street, and a gown which is so befurbelowed that it is a positive danger to society, while her hair is drawn up or down, and waved or curled, and twisted at the last French dictation. She likes 'to startle the natives,' she avows, and succeeds. But between the two is there not the dress of the gentlewoman? Dress that the factory girls at the club may copy—if they can—without making their daily walk through the street dangerous to their self-respect? Dress that is *chic* and dainty, and yet suitable? Earnest Christian workers who declare that in their devotion to the saving of men and women they have no time to think of such trifles as appearance, are surely not in possession of the whole truth. The way to the heart, and to the reason too, is often found to be by way of the eye. And the old man or young woman, to say nothing of the child, was never yet born who was not susceptible to the influence of a sweet face, which means a face full of sweetness and strength, and a becoming dress. But the whole duty of dress would require a volume to expound fully.

* * * * * *

Elevated Dress. What dress ought not to be is suggested in the following paragraph from a Canadian paper—

In the Bathurst Street Methodist Church, Toronto, the Rev. C. O. Johnston inaugurated a campaign against the wearing of high hats by ladies in church. 'These hats, with their mountain-high feathers, go bobbing mercilessly about,' said Mr. Johnston. 'The unfortunate man who sits behind keeps his head going back and forth to keep in line with the speaker, and when he

leaves the service he is as tired as if he had done a hard day's work.' English ladies please note.

* * * * * *

The Making of Geography.

History, we are told, is often made by women, but geography is generally left to the other sex. Nevertheless, an instance where woman changed geography, or at least the stuff from which geography is made—national possessions—has lately been retold. Miss Alice Longfellow, the youngest daughter of the poet, was addressing the Daughters of the American Revolution, a society that has many branches throughout the States, and retold the story of the saving to the American nation of Mount Vernon, the home and the burial-place of General Washington. Miss Ann Pamela Cunningham, a gentlewoman of South Carolina, was the saviour of the historic spot. She was passing up the Potomac River one day in 1853, when she heard the steamer bell toll on passing the grave of the country's hero, and there and then she became possessed with the desire to restore it. The house was then occupied by a grand nephew of the First President, John Augustine Washington, whose open-handed hospitality had emptied his coffers and left him nothing wherewith to keep the house even in decent repair. Shortly afterwards the historic house was in immediate danger of falling under the auctioneer's hammer, and Miss Cunningham made a spirited appeal, first of all to the women of the South for united action. This was in 1854. The immediate result was the offer of help from the popular lecturer Edward Everett, who started the fund with 68,000 dollars as the result of his lectures. Then began the battle, not only for the necessary funds, but against misunderstanding and bitterness which at this distance of time are wholly incomprehensible. Northerners withdrew when they found that the estates would become the property of Virginia. Congress set itself to defeat the aims of the Ladies' Mount Vernon Association. Miss Cunningham, although a woman of strong determination, seems to have been almost hyper-sensitive, probably owing to the fact that she was a confirmed invalid, and wrote at the end of the years of struggle, 'None but God can know what I have suffered for Mount Vernon.' And when the critical moment had passed and success was assured, she lay in a stupor for three weeks.

The Civil War came as an interruption to the carrying out of the practical part of this scheme, but the place was treated as

neutral ground by the conflicting forces, and at the close Miss Cunningham saw her efforts completely crowned. She obtained an indemnity from government, and went to live on the Mount, which to her was sacred ground, and personally superintended the work of restoration. Certainly her patient labour, lasting over many years, and her determination in spite of obstacles, added to her courage and patriotism, deserve of themselves to keep for her a niche in the temple of fame.

* * * * * *

Over-pressure in Girls' Schools.

Is the whole system of our modern education at fault, in that so many girls become pale, anæmic, and lifeless when they ought to be full of vitality and joy? There is no question but that in the best middle-class education, that of good schools, there is an enormous amount of over-pressure. This was admitted at the outset in a paper, and discussion of the subject by experts, lately, at a meeting of the Birmingham Teachers' Association. The reader of the paper, the head-mistress of one of the most successful of High Schools, postulated that over-pressure did exist, but did not regard the causes as fundamental in the educational system, but as incidental and arising from causes which might be ended or mended. And those causes she reckoned to be two—parental ignorance and examinations. Parents, with no knowledge of hygiene, arranged life at home badly. Late hours, unwise feeding, and want of exercise induced evils which were put down to overpressure. And often they expected so much from their children in the way of work and examinations that play threatened to become a lost art. This is the indictment of the present. Of course there is another side to this question as to the objection of teachers to allow the children's home work to be interfered with by the parent.

Then as to examinations. This head-mistress advocated that no girl under sixteen should be allowed to go in for examinations; and, further, that there ought to be an agitation for modifying examination standards, and for tabooing those which encouraged cramming and an undue attention to details. An excess of home work, payment by results, and a multiplication of unnecessary trifles were points for teachers' consideration. And to the head-mistress ought to fall the due ordering of the whole, so that everything, all studies and play, should fall into their proper proportions.

This is expert opinion, and as such deserves our consideration.

* * * * * *

The Memory of Felicia Hemans.

In these days the learned and literary public sneers at the claims of Felicia Hemans to be called a poetess at all. And let it be conceded at once that her verse is not great, that her talent was not genius, that she made no epoch, and that her technique is somewhat shaky. One would not mention her in the same breath with Elizabeth Barrett Browning, or even with Mrs. Meynell, but she has her place nevertheless, and that place she filled perfectly. I cannot but remember gratefully the writer of—

> 'The stately homes of England,
> How beautiful they stand,'

for I learnt it out of a pretty edition that had a picture of one of the stately homes on the page; and, although it is, I am getting afraid to think how many years since I saw it, it still in my mind's eye remains the model of all that is beautiful in a home. But Mrs. Hemans is more than a writer for children. Her claim to remembrance was well set forth at a meeting recently held in Liverpool to raise subscriptions for a memorial to her. Liverpool has just awakened to a sense of ownership and pride in having been her home, and I believe her birthplace, and is anxious to perpetuate the fact, and do honour to her and the city at the same time. One of the speakers at the meeting was Canon Blencowe, who rightly described her work as unambitious, but added, 'It always appeals to our best feelings and touches our hearts.' And to any one who touches our best feelings we certainly owe some gratitude, if nothing more. It is highly improbable that Felicia Heman's poetry will ever be extensively read again; our emotions have become too complex, and our tastes too critical for her work. But it is well, nevertheless, that we should keep alive some memory of the poetess of simple emotions, plain yet musical words, to which, in our old age, we shall be thankful to listen as to an echo from the lost tones of childhood.

ANNIE GROSER HURD.

THROUGH PINK GLASSES.

IT should be good news to all lovers of poetry that Mr. Austin Dobson has collected the flower of his work in a single volume, his lately published 'Collected Poems.' There are not many in these days who touch upon the same class of subject as Mr. Dobson; it is safe to say there is not one who handles the said subjects with equal grace, felicity, and tender gaiety. It has been rather the fashion to regard Mr. Dobson as a sufficiently elegant versifier of the school of Praed, or Locker-Lampson—a man who could turn you out occasional verse of good enough quality, flavoured with a dash of pleasant old worldliness, but not quite up to the level of the recognised models of this kind. I fancy this new volume will set his reputation on a much firmer and higher basis. It is true that he is a poet with no very clamorous message to the world; but he is none the less a poet, and an artist. Verses, like novels, are sometimes all the better for not being written 'with a purpose.'

* * * * * *

It is possible that few lives are so hard as that of the successful humourist. Critics are quick to detect the slightest lapse from former excellence: even when the quality is well maintained they are apt to cry out that there is no advance. In such cases the memory of his past glories must hang like a millstone round the author's neck, effectually preventing him from writing with the old facile irresponsibility. Yet Mark Twain is content, in the very title of his latest book, to challenge comparison with one of his greatest triumphs. And 'More Tramps Abroad' comes out of the ordeal better than might have been expected. This time we are taken through Greater Britain—India, Africa, and Australia—and the best-informed of us may learn something new from the arch-humourist's pages. It is characteristic of Mark Twain that he blends amusement with instruction more satisfactorily than the best-advertised nursery primer, and in the

midst of the wildest extravagance he will now and again introduce a solid fact or two for your delectation. Also, he is scrupulously just and even generous to England and the English rule. 'More Tramps Abroad' is nearly as full of good things as its prototype, and perhaps even fuller of useful information.

* * * * * *

There is the flavour of a past age about Mr. Arthur Galton's little book on 'Matthew Arnold'—a dainty volume containing two appreciative essays and a certain number of letters from the poet to Mr. Galton. These, I must confess, do not seem to me profoundly interesting; they are, for the most part, short notes on unimportant subjects, and they do not add to our knowledge of the man in any large degree. But the two essays are well worth reading: they are scholarly and instructive, and Mr. Galton's prose style is formed upon the best models. It is possible that some might call him a pedant, but even pedantry is sometimes a welcome relief in days when so many write without scholarship and without restraint. The measured cadence of his sentences recalls the stately periods of the Augustan age.

* * * * * *

I have not read very many new novels of late. After all, life is short, and there are other things to do in the world besides novel-reading. Then, too, at this season of the year, the plethora of new novels in the market—to say nothing of the flood of Christmas books—has commonly the effect of damping my enthusiasm as a reader. Still, one or two have come my way, and among them 'The Skipper's Wooing,' by W. W. Jacobs. Perhaps you would hardly be justified in terming it a novel, but you would certainly be justified in laughing heartily once in every few pages. Mr. Jacobs—as he proved before in 'Many Cargoes'—has a most fascinating knack of humorous description, and his account of the adventures of the captain and crew of the *Seamew* in their search for Miss Annis Gething's father is thoroughly amusing from start to finish. The cook's escapades are particularly delightful. It must be admitted that the fun flags a little when once the lost mariner is found; but by that time the jaded laugher is perhaps not sorry for a little rest.

* * * * * *

It is evident that Mr. Jacobs has studied thoroughly a certain

class of sailor—the skipper and hands of the small vessels that ply from port to port along our coast—and he seems to have been the first to discover the value of this untried field in fiction. In time, I suppose, he will find imitators enough; but for the present he is alone, and making good use of his opportunities. I should be inclined to doubt his power to write a long novel; the volume before me is by no means a large one as it stands; and even so Mr. Jacobs has been compelled to pad it out with an additional short story—an essay in the horrible, called 'The Brown Man's Servant.' The tale is good enough of its kind, but it contrasts rather strangely with the bright humour of its predecessor. The set of the current is all in favour of Mr. Jacobs' method; perhaps in a year or so the long novel will be extinct, and the half-crown story shall suffice our simple needs. Reviewers, at the least, will benefit by the change.

* * * * * *

Another story that has come my way is 'The Iron Cross,' by R. H. Sherard. Without being a great work, it is eminently well worth reading, for it has a distinctly good plot, and the character of the hero is developed with considerable skill. Walter Pughe is by no means the common sort of hero familiar to novel-readers; indeed, it must be confessed that he is something of a fool, and, at times, not very far removed from a knave. But there is a spice of good in him, and we are left at the end (as is very right and proper) with the conviction that the good has triumphed. Mr. Sherard has laid his scene in the Landes department of France—a district with which he is thoroughly well acquainted—and he has imported plenty of local colour into his pages. The book improves steadily as it goes on, and few readers will care to lay it down unfinished.

* * * * *

The novels of Miss Wilkins need little recommendation, either in America or England. There is a simplicity and quiet calm about her pictures of village life that have effectually captured the hearts of thoughtful readers in both countries. 'Jerome: a Poor Man,' is decidedly one of her best stories; it is a book to read and to linger over. A simple story of a noble character, nursed in poverty, but generous even to excess, 'Jerome' is a true and admirably executed picture of human life. I wish we had more writers of the stamp of Miss Wilkins; careful workmanship is too rare a quality in these days of hurry and unrest.

* * * * * *

For 1898 there are already many works of importance promised. I see that an enterprising gentleman proposes to publish a series of histories of the various colleges of Oxford and Cambridge—a matter of some forty volumes. Then there is the new edition of Byron's works, to which I referred some months back, which Mr. Murray is about to issue in twelve volumes. The first will probably be ready about the beginning of February. A 'Life of the Prince of Wales' may also be expected; rumour assigns the authorship to Mr. H. D. Traill. Mr. Morley is understood to be writing a work on modern political history, which may throw some light on the inner history of the Irish Home Rule movement. Among lighter works, we shall have Mr. Wells's new book, 'The War of the Worlds,' which has been running as a serial in one of the sixpenny magazines. I believe it is to be revised and considerably lengthened before appearing in its new form. For the rest—but it is safe to assume that there will be no scarcity of new fiction. From every side come announcements that celebrated authors are hard at work on new novels. The coming year will, no doubt, witness the usual number of unprecedented successes, most of which will have passed quietly into oblivion well before the end of the century. I am inclined to think, after Mrs. Malaprop, that our lasting friendships in the world of books are those which begin with a little aversion.

E. H. LACON WATSON.

The China Cupboard.

ARRANGED BY CHELSEA CHINA.

(*For the regulations of all 'Monthly Packet' Competitions, see p.* 120.)

FIRST SHELF.

Chelsea China has only to wish a happy New Year to all her contributors, old and new, and to the dear old 'Packet' yet another prosperous voyage to 'the Island of the Blest.' She will, we hope, call at new ports and take aboard many fresh passengers, while keeping comfortable berths for all old friends. We cordially invite correspondence on any subject in which our readers are interested, and on all grievances which they wish to air. All views shall have impartial expression, and, as far as possible, all tastes shall be considered. Comparing notes on practical matters often leads to useful results, and Chelsea China herself would welcome letters from any one who has *personal* experience of the working, in England, of what is called the 'Dupanloup method' of catechising for Sunday schools, and which has been partly naturalised by Mr. Spencer Jones. She does not need information as to the method itself, but only as to its result when applied to the rather complex conditions of English Sunday schools.

Another interesting subject would be 'Lectures for Ladies,' on nursing, ambulance, cookery, and literary subjects. When these are started in any place, does the interest in them continue after the first year or two? And if not, why not? We should like information, after two or three years' experience of teaching the local ideas to shoot.

Also, if any lady who sits on a Parish Council would tell us a little of her experiences, how interesting and profitable they might be. These are but a few of the subjects, hardly suitable to be set for prize papers, but which would greatly interest our readers. And news of any special bird, or insect, or plant, would be very nice to hear.

VARIETY SUBJECT FOR NOVEMBER.

Compare the characters of Charles I. of England and Louis XVI. of France.

Talking of views, in setting this question Chelsea China hardly considered what opposing views would be hurled at her. In assigning the prize, these, of course, cannot be considered at all; but as most of the papers have considerable literary merit, it is very difficult to decide between the Royalists and the Liberals. On the whole, *Bluebell's* is written with the most spirit, and will receive the prize. *Anyas Leigh's* would be given as being nearly equally good, and quite contradictory, but is too long. *Holly Leaf* is legitimist to the backbone. *Cynthia* comes down on the two sovereigns with good shrewd blows—on weak places. *Miranda* (very good); *Ursula* and *Lobster*

hold the balance more even. *Scotland Yard* follows *Holly Leaf* with a short paper. The subject has proved popular, and brought out good writing.

COMPARE CHARLES I. OF ENGLAND AND LOUIS XVI. OF FRANCE.

The halo of sanctified romance cast over the characters of Charles I. and Louis XVI. is almost, if not entirely, due to the pathetic dignity with which each met his death. Of both it may be said that 'Nothing in life became them like the leaving of it.' For the first and last time the option of decision, the bane of both lives, was taken from them; but one course was open—to step from Time to Eternity, and this they did with such patient, unhesitating, faithful assurance, that men shrank from examining with too critical eyes the past deeds and omissions of these Christian gentlemen.

Both were true to the end to the guiding principle of their lives. Charles attested in his own person the futility of the theory of the Divine right of kings; and Louis the impossibility of absolute monarchy, the hopelessness of national government without popular consent.

In one other point the French and English kings were alike: both found finance the stumbling-block of princes, and utterly failed in their attempt to grasp the control of it. One of the plainest proofs that Louis was incapable of realising his position, was that he considered the summoning of the States-general as a 'great financial expedient.' Though he was personally simple and economical in his tastes, he could not control others in extravagance; whilst Charles consistently treated 'a great expenditure as the almsgiving of kings.'

It is easy for us, 'the heirs of all ages,' to see the political and social blunders of these two unfortunate men; it was no such simple matter for them. Both inherited dispositions and principles which blinded them to their true duties.

Louis, pure amidst gross immorality, sincere in a flagrantly false age, came to the throne with a fervent desire to bring his people happiness. Eager to work, he was fettered by royal traditions. Truly anxious to raise the nation, he failed to see that his system was merely glorified pauperism, and that his well-meant efforts only served to excite discontent in the many, gratitude in the few. He was open-minded enough to be influenced by modern liberalism; too dull to push it to a practical issue. He was seized on the outset by a realisation of the vast hopelessness of his enterprise; constitutional apathy and irresolution stepped in, and by degrees he sank from the ardent reformer to the pleasure-seeking king. His life is expressed in two extant portraits: in one, of the year 1774, he is 'a handsome, heavy boy,' still, with possibilities for good; in the other, of the year 1789, he is a 'fat, dull king,' with success despaired of, disappointment secured, failure inevitable.

Whereas Louis was destitute of outward dignity, and hated ceremony, Charles was his very opposite. Perhaps no king has lent his face with greater success to the painter's brush, nor vied so successfully with the pompous display of Tudor sovereigns; as few kings have hidden behind that stately show, such mean qualities. To a narrow understanding and limited knowledge of statecraft, he united a boundless belief in his own powers of kingship, which was not justified by the result. His theory of government might be summed up in Louis XIV.'s famous saying: 'L'Etat c'est moi.'

His power of winning faithful and devoted friends was only equalled by his cowardice in deserting them; and his weakness in relinquishing a point when it might have been *well* maintained by his obstinate tenacity in clinging to the shadow when the stake was lost.

He was almost mediæval in his honest religious professions, and false words and actions. He was a bad friend, a bad king, and (to judge by the results) a bad though affectionate father.

He was, in his own eyes, 'the pious prince,' under whom slavery was freedom, and the goodness of whose cause justified all means to its attainment. His system was one of regal egotism: the king was everything, the nation nothing. In his petty ideal kingdom no place was found for the principles of popular freedom and justice, and he did his best to ignore both in real life.

Louis was held back from reform by the dread of anarchy; and his anxiety to prevent civil war led him to beg the French emigrants not to join the German relief force.

Charles was blind to the need of improvements, and encouraged whilst he deplored the Civil War.

As one places the two men, as it were, side by side, and tries to look at them apart from the glamour of misfortune, Louis appears as a good, mediocre, weak king, who failed because he could not execute what he felt to be right; who failed, in fact, because he was not the man of genius who alone might have come out victorious in such a time of national chaos and corruption.

Charles, too, is weak, but without Louis's genuine desire to raise his people. A weak egotist, his success would have meant his country's ruin; and, however much one may deplore his fate, one's sympathy is excited not so much by the sentence as by the manner in which he bore it.—BLUEBELL.

PRIZE WINNER FOR NOVEMBER.

Miss A. Huntingford, Barnwell Rectory, Oundle.

VARIETY SUBJECT FOR JANUARY.

Take a female character from a writer of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, and compare them. N.B.—Shakespeare is included.

SECOND SHELF.

PROSE COMPETITION.

SUBJECT FOR NOVEMBER.

Smoke.

The smoke has curled very gracefully, and has been treated from every possible point of view. Chelsea China gives the prize to *Cynthia's* lively conversation. *Dagonet*, a new contributor, runs her very hard; and *Proserpina* (who ought to be heavily handicapped) sends a charming little paper. *Holly Leaf* is also very good.

We propose with the new year to start a series of *Studies of Character*. The characters will be of every sort; some will be human, some will not. But it must be noted that an individual specimen is always intended, not a dissertation on the class. We start with a subject only too familiar to many of us, and those who may not have met with it in actual life will perhaps present us with that ideal which we all had once, but, alas! do not often meet with in the flesh.

SMOKE.

We were lounging comfortably in the firelight in the happy, lazy hour between afternoon tea and the ringing of the dressing-bell. We were a party of eight—brothers, sisters, and cousins, who had grown up in that close intimacy that can never be exactly matched in any friendships formed in later life. Though they may be more near and tender, they are never quite the same, because they do not go back into the dim recesses of that mysterious time when we lived, as it were, a separate life from any that comes after, and were called 'the children.' Mother was out, so we had had our tea in the old schoolroom, and had upset our cups, and made toast, and romped, and laughed, and talked nonsense like the boys and girls we had been seven or eight years ago. We had subsided, somewhat exhausted by our noisy merriment, and there had been silence for some minutes, when Susie, who was half lying, half sitting on the hearthrug gazing into the fire with dreamy eyes, suddenly exclaimed—

'Smoke! What does it mean?'

We all understood in a moment, for she was beginning a favourite twilight game of our own invention, which everybody remembered, though we had not played it for years, and Austin promptly responded from the depths of the big chair—

'The source of comfort and contentment, the soother of irritation. There we sit, I on one side of the fire, a congenial spirit on the other, each in a comfortable chair, each with a pipe, and so we talk or are silent as it may please us to be, and the smoke rings curl gracefully, and——'

'Nonsense,' broke in Anne's brisk, decided tones. She was curled up on the old sofa with Hilary, and as she sat upright her dark eyes and eager face were those of the girl Anne, who used to fight all our dreamy fancies, and endeavour to rule the schoolroom on the lines of practical common sense. 'You sit and waste your time smoking tobacco, on which you have wasted your money. That is what smoke means to me—waste, wicked, wanton waste.'

Hilary laughed, and gave Anne a little shake.

'Don't be so hard on the poor men,' she said. 'I look at smoke quite differently; to me it means happy expectation. Imagine a tired traveller coming wearily over a lonely road longing to reach the home from which he has long been absent. He mounts the last hill, and looks down into the valley. He cannot see the cottage; it is hidden by trees; but he sees the curling smoke which rises from the chimney, and it means to him a warm fireside, food, and rest, and the love of wife and children.'

'But it may mean disappointed hope,' said Susie, as she drew herself up and rested her curly head against my knee. 'Suppose your traveller goes down into the valley to find not a happy hearth-side, but the smoking ruins of his home.'

'Or it may be the emblem of domestic discomfort,' suggested Gilbert. 'Picture to yourself a happy party seated round the fire watching the dancing flames and enjoying themselves as we are doing now. All is harmony and gladness, until puff comes your friend the smoke down the chimney instead of up. The children choke, grandfather coughs, the mother is fretted because all her clean room is covered with smuts. They become irritable, and as the smoke comes down the chimney peace flies through the door.'

'Smoke may mean departed joys,' said Beatrix. 'Did you ever see a tiny fluttering column of blue smoke rising among the woods on a summer evening? and, going farther on, have you seen the dying embers of a gipsy fire, and unmistakable signs that children have had a happy little picnic? There is no bitterness in the sight; the pleasure may be repeated, and will always be a happy sunny memory.'

'Smoke is the evidence of things not seen,' said I, as I played with Susie's hair, 'which is only another way of putting an old proverb, "Where there is smoke there must be fire." If you see smoke, even tobacco smoke, Austin, you know your fellow-creatures are not far away. Therefore it means companionship.'

'Companionship with a vengeance sometimes,' broke in Giles. 'Ugliness, disfigurement, dirt, obscurity, are all produced by smoke when too many fellow-creatures are all crowded together. Give me a clear sky and solitude.'

'Give me my pipe,' cried Austin, with a sly glance at Anne.

'Give us all patience to bear with our neighbours' smoke,' said sweet-tempered Hilary.

And then the dressing-bell rang.—CYNTHIA.

1. In the warm curtained room, before the bright smokeless fire, and under the clear flame of the hanging lamp, the air is hazy with the faint blue of tobacco smoke, and through the haze, adding in their disappearance to its thickness, the delicate curls and rings of pale grey and white smoke float from the pipe and circle and hover like dying forms of dreams and fairies round the smoker's head. Slow, deliberate, graceful, and fantastic, their suggestive beauty and evanescence surely give character to the dreamy, contented, benevolent philosophy of the smoker's face.

No one, they tell us, cares to smoke in the dark; the blind are no smokers; pipes and cigars die out for want of attention in long tunnels or dark drives.

It is the smoke, beautiful with all the suggestive beauty of perishable things, that gives delight to the pipe.

2. Into the luminous clearness of the frosty air a great chimney discharges its flood of smoke, billow upon billow of cloud, white and amber and black and grey, shot with tongues of flame, broken with the vapour of steam, a miniature Vesuvius, a cloud creator more potent and impressive than any fabled dragon, fitfully belching smoke and flames. Later, when in an attenuated veil it hangs over narrow streets and trees, whose trunks are permanently blackened by its agency, it mixes with exhalations from a damp and cold clay soil, and fog, more or less dense, is the result—fog that on a dull sunless day hangs like a pall over everything, damping, chilling, and depressing, making pallid faces, weary limbs, and heavy hearts; but also fog which on a sunny day melts into a golden and opalesque haze, that glorifies and softens everything, and rising to the clouds in tender vapour gives to smoky sunsets a glory and a mystery that even a Venetian sunset cannot surpass.

3. A sign of sordid avarice; the familiar demon of capital, slowly killing the old, artistic, human handicrafts; the death of a country's rural woodland charm; the cloud enveloping working life, sapping health, and energy, and making work and industry a thing of weariness and squalor and disgrace!

Or a sign of wealth and progress, of man's mastery over nature and her forces; the herald of civilization and education; the proof of invention, industry and solid material advance?

Either or both according to what it mingles and mixes with; to what stronger force acclimatises it; just as it is regarded as a master or a slave.—PROSERPINA.

CLASS LIST FOR NOVEMBER.

DISTINCTION.—*Dagonette, Prosepine, Holly Leaf, Nora.*

CLASS I.

Lag-last, Lindum, May Wyme, Trilby, Winifred Spurling, Brown Linnet, Skena Vaw, Doronicum, Noel, Daughter of the Soil, Medore, Miranda, Irene, Try Again.

No Second Class Papers.

PRIZE WINNER FOR NOVEMBER.

Miss Lena Tyack, 33, Apsley Road, Clifton.

Studies of Character.

JANUARY.

A British Sunday Scholar.

WHO, WHEN, AND WHERE?

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR NOVEMBER.

1. Who were (*a*) Glycine, (*b*) Tertzky, (*c*) Roland de Vaux?
2. Who

> 'Heard from far,
> Ancestral voices prophesying war'?

3. Where are these lines?—

> 'With other ministrations thou, O Nature!
> Healest thy wandering and distempered child:
> Thou pourest on him thy soft influences,
> Thy sunny hues, fair forms, and breathing sweets;
> Thy melodies of woods and winds and waters!
> Till he relent and can no more endure
> To be a jarring and a dissonant thing
> Amid this general dance and minstrelsy;
> But, bursting into tears, wins back his way,
> His angry spirit healed and harmonized
> By the benignant touch of love and beauty.'

4. What formed a 'cushion plump' for a 'hermit good,' and where did he live?
5. Of whom did our poet use these words?—

(1) 'Sublime of thought, and confident of fame.'
(2) 'Friend of the wise, and teacher of the good.'

6. Who, and on what occasion,

> 'With that oath which smote air, earth, and sea,
> Stamped her strong foot and said she would be free'?

ANSWERS TO NOVEMBER QUESTIONS.

(*All from the poetical works of* SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.)

1. (*a*) The orphan daughter of Chef Ragozzi (Zapolya, part II.) (*b*) Brother-in-law of Wallenstein, and commander in the army (Piccolomini. Translated from SCHILLER.) (*c*) The father of Geraldine, and the early friend of Sir Leoline. ('Christabel.')
2. Kubla Khan. (See poem of that name.)
3. They form part of Alvar's soliloquy in the Dungeon. ('Remorse,' act v., sc. i.)
4.

> 'It is the moss that wholly hides
> The rotted old oak stump.'
> 'The Hermit good lives in that wood
> Which slopes down to the sea.'
> ('The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,' vii.)

5. (1) Of Chatterton. (See Monody on his death, v. 6.) (2) Of Wordsworth. (See first line of a poem composed on the night after his recitation of a poem on the growth of an individual mind.)

6. France, in her great Revolution. (France; an Ode, st. ii.)

CORRECT ANSWERS RECEIVED.

A. C. R., *A. E. L.*, *Athena*, *Cavalier*, *Cymraes*, *Dianora*, *Double-Dummy*, 34; Εγκρατεια, *Eleanor*, *E. T.*, *Findhorn*, *F. R. D.*, *Helen*, *Holly Leaf*, *Irnham*, *Isabel*, *Lady Abbess*, *Lenore*, *Malaprop*, *Mesech*, *Royston Crow*, *R. V. H.*, *Scott*, *Sintram*, *Syndicate*, *The Bratchet*, *Trimmer*, *W. Adey*, *White Cat*, *Workman*, *W. Spurling*, *Lucy Hart*, *The Questing Beast*, 36; *Everton Trio*, *Honeyland*, 34; *Atalanta*, *Aspley Guise*, *Kittiwake*, *Melton Mowbray*, 33; *Lindum*, 31; *Nemo*, *Sophonisba*, 30.

Several solvers have given no reference to answer 4. Of course they knew where to find the answer, as is shown by their quoting it correctly, but it would not be fair to give them the same marks as those who, following the rule often mentioned, give chapter and verse.

All-Fours omitted to put 'Search Questions' on her envelope, and cannot be credited with marks.

Helen. You gave no *answer* to No. 5, for September, but only a reference.

Fourteen Streams is credited with 36 marks for October.

Welcome to *Lucy Hart*, from America, and thanks for her kind remarks.

NOTICE.—'Chelsea China' hopes to introduce some new elements into the Search Questions this year, so that they may suit all tastes. The method of awarding marks will also be changed to admit of more elasticity.

Attend carefully to the form of each question. Full references are always to be given.

The rules on the last page must be strictly enforced.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR JANUARY.

(*All connected with one subject.*)

1. Where are these lines?

'Peaceful was the night
Wherein the Prince of light,
His reign of peace upon the earth began.'

2. Where is it said that 'the bird of dawning singeth all night long'?

3. What was the business that Marley's ghost had neglected while on earth?

4. Who was controlled by

'The merry, merry bells of Yule,'

and who heard the bells on Christmas Day—

'Their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat,
Of peace on earth, goodwill to men'?

5. What was the end of the Fir Tree that had been a Christmas-tree, and had heard the story of Humpty-Dumpty?

6. Give one favourite quotation on the subject of these questions. (It may be in verse or prose, but must be short.)

THIRD SHELF.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

Quotation wanted.—'I shall pass through this world but once: any good thing therefore that I can do, or any kindness that I can shew to any human being, let me do it now: let me not defer it, or neglect it; for I shall not pass this way again.'

FORTUNATUS.—1. Where can I find Fanny Kemble's 'Advice to Students.' I do not think this is the correct title, but I mean the poem containing these lines—

'A sacred burden is this life, ye hear,
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
Fail not for sorrow, falter not for sin,
But onward, upward, till the goal ye win!'

2. I should like to know the names of good commentaries on Wordsworth, Shakespeare, Tennyson, and Longfellow.

Sambola is trying to make a collection of quaint old sayings connected with the days and seasons of the year in all languages, such as (to quote a well-known example)—'If Candlemas be fair and clear, there'll be two winters in one year.' Can you help me to find some, especially for November and December?

ANSWERS.

NORNA.—The Knight of Intercession. *Poems, Rev. S. G. Stone* (Rivington's). Miss Ellacombe, Deva Cottage, Alum Chine Road, Bournemouth, West, will send it (postage paid) or copy it, if Norna will send address. It is over two hundred lines.

DEAR CHELSEA CHINA.—In answer to the query signed by Miss Marian A. Sewell, Dunmow, I append a few superstitions connected with cows.—LUCY WRIGHTSON.

1. A bought cow should be led by its tail into the stable to make it settle quickly.
2. Who ever kills a black cow will have a death in the house.
3. Milk your first cow that calves into a brand new pot; put three pennies in, and give them with milk and pot to the first beggar.
4. To prevent a cow losing its horns, creep between its fore legs.
5. Never admit strangers at milking time.
6. Never express gratitude for given milk, else the cow will dry up.
7. The first time cows are driven to pasture in spring time, they should be milked through a wreath of ground ivy.
8. When a cow groans in the night, it is the Jüdel (goblin) playing with her.

BOOK NOTICES.

Life of S. Cyprian, by the late Archbishop of Canterbury (Macmillan & Co.). We call our readers' attention to this book because, though, of course, it is impossible for ordinary readers to appreciate the scholarship and judgment, with which it is written, its clear statements of events do come within the scope of any one interested in Church History, and we can all learn from it to understand what the *real* work was that was done by the Fathers of the Church—what were the actual temptations overcome by the Martyrs and Confessors, and can study in plain daylight the condition of Christian life in early times. Without the glamour how much greater is the glory! And how full of lessons for ourselves!

NOVELS.

Captains Courageous, by Rudyard Kipling (Macmillan, 6*s*). This is the most delightful boys' book of the year. It tells of the spoilt son of an American 'multi-millionaire,' who, falling off a liner bound for Europe, is picked up by the crew of the *We're Here*, good and religious fishermen, and has to remain with them till their season is over. How we smell the sea *and* the cod-fish, and feel the horror and the glory of the deep sea, all readers of Mr. Kipling can guess. It is possible that equally spirited adventures could be found in other books of the kind, but nowhere else would the hero have been so exactly the sort of boy who *could* have successfully encountered them, no other writer could have touched off the American types with such brilliant sympathy and insight. The rush of the great millionaire's private car across the continent to meet his recovered son makes quite a new use of the forces of the modern world. The moral is more prominent than is usual with this writer, and it is a thoroughly good one.

The King with Two Faces, by Mary E. Coleridge (Hutchinson & Co., 6*s*.). This story is of the type made familiar to us in *The Prisoner of Zenda* and *Under the Red Robe*, that of the political adventurous romance. It is an excellent specimen of that popular type, and is, moreover, crossed and transfused by lights and shadows from older and deeper romance. Here and there we feel that the young Scandinavian hero was of the same blood as Sintram and Thiodolf, nay, even of the mystical Aslauga's knight himself. We are too ignorant of Swedish history to know how far the character of Gustav III. is ready-made to the author's hand, but it is an extremely striking one. The situations are of exceptional vividness, and the literary skill displayed much above the common. In some of the author's former works the interpretation has hardly kept pace with the vision, but in this case everything is worked into a clear, consistent, and poetical whole.

The Prophet's Mantle, by Christabel Coleridge (Isbister & Co.), appeared last year as the Christmas number of the *Sunday Magazine*. It is now reproduced in a prettily got-up volume. It is the story of George Gladwyn, who inherits curious and warring impulses from a great-grandfather, a Westmoreland dalesman, half poet, half ne'er-do-weel, who, after being converted, was a great local preacher. What George does with the nature he inherits it is the real aim of the story to show.

Stilts and Study, by Annette Lyster (S.P.C.K., 2*s*.). This is a pretty romantic story of a great friendship. It is highly improbable, but very pleasant to read, and will be as popular as the author's *White Gipsy;* or, *Alone in Crowds*.

In choosing the subject of 'For His Country's Sake' (Horace Cox, 1 vol.), Miss Black has secured our interest beforehand. Few of us can remember a time when, either walking through the streets with Caractacus, or standing before Pope Gregory in the slave market, the Briton in Rome was not an object of our sympathy. Time after time has he been drawn, without seeming to stale his infinite variety. That he should be superior in every way to everybody he meets is a pleasing theory to which Britons cling to this day. The Esca of the story before us visits the Eternal City in the reign of Trajan; more fortunate in this respect than his namesake in Whyte Melville's 'Gladiators,' and early enough to see her at the height of her power, not on the verge of her fall, as she appears in Sir Herbert Maxwell's 'Duke of Britain.' By her careful study of authorities, Miss Black has been able to give such a picture of the period, as may be of service to young, perhaps to old, readers, by helping them to connect names and dates unawares; while the illustrations, from engravings and drawings, that reproduce the buildings of the empire, will also help the traveller's imagination in the difficult task of seeing the Rome of the past in the Rome of to-day.

There is not much plot in the story, but the interest is kept up to the last; it being ingeniously contrived that the stainless hero should endure contumely without reflecting on the magnanimity of Trajan. Knowing, however, how far the master's arm could reach, one cannot but wonder at any courtier daring to offer him such an insult as that of counselling his honoured guest to walk in his triumph.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DEAR CHELSEA CHINA.—May I be allowed to make a comment on the very interesting article on the 'Hierarchy of the Divina Commedia'?

The term 'Archangels' has, in mediæval theology, two distinct meanings. It designates the choir immediately above the angels, but it also describes the seven great spirits in the highest choir, *i.e.* the Seraphim. Therefore the terms 'Prince' in Daniel, and 'Archangel' in Jude, as applied to Michael, are consistent with his being a Seraph. See the words of Raphael (Job xii. 15). Shelley has a reference to the seven great spirits. The four first are always Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Uriel; the remaining three are differently named, but the best authorities, I believe, give Jehudiel the Remunerator, Barachiel the Helper, and Scaltiel the Angel of Prayer.

I should like to make some remarks about the moving of the spheres, but, mindful that I am not writing a China Cupboard competition, I refrain from trespassing on your space.—MIRANDA.

SMOKE.

What an amount of strength there seems in that thick volume of smoke! See how it uncurls itself like some disturbed python, rearing its head up to the clouds, only to disappear in an aggravating nothingness! Or notice that dainty blue wreathing, like the trailing garment of some sweet spirit, we watch its graceful movements, wondering what new phase of beauty it will assume, when, imperceptibly as it were, it fades away.

Again, look at that huge, belching chimney; here at last is strength, here is something that will endure. We can almost imagine some awful fiend at work, pouring out sparks and flames. But no; go far enough away and see how the huge volcanic-like eruption, getting less and less as it ascends, resolves itself into an insignificant and harmless vapour, and finally disappears altogether.

Smoke! smoke! all smoke! Can we not find a parallel in our own lives?

There is that plan we had in the old school-days; we were going to make a name in the world, our deeds of learning were to raise the envy of all. For months the horizon was lighted by the golden haze of success; then, interest flagged, other plans came forward, and our lovely rose-tinted projects ended in—smoke!

Then, what help we meant to give dear mother in her home and social duties! That castle of filial devotion, how it reared its giant head! for there was no end to our intentions. No worries, if we could prevent it, should ever touch our dear one. Had she not worked for us all our life long? It were little enough return, this easing of her burden. How easy it seemed. For a few weeks—our cheek reddens—not all at once; but by sure degrees, the lordly edifice of 'help mother' dissolves in—smoke.

There is a tender light in our eyes, a warm thrill in our heart, as we think of one rosy, flower-laden palace, wrapt in a soft haze of love and daintiness; a dream of unending happiness was attached to this castle, gardens of exquisite flowers surrounded it, and oh! the charm of life within its walls—smoke?

Surely not. Alas, alas, the demon of jealousy entered and we ourselves helped to tear down the walls! Never again will their beauty set our heart aglow and warm selfishness into sacrifice. The fabric too delicate for reconstruction, has ended in—smoke.

Our musings are too sad; with the failing year comes over us the failure of our plans, the evaporation of our best and noblest intentions—smoke—smoke—all ending in smoke.

But an echo of the old time rings comfort in our ears, and seeing in winter but a rest before a new and better life in the spring, we remember that 'men may rise on stepping-stones of their dead selves to "higher things."'—DAGONETTE.

MONTHLY PACKET SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF MISSIONS.

SUBJECT FOR FIRST QUARTER: SOUTH AFRICA.

QUESTIONS FOR JANUARY.

1. Give an account of the founding and objects of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts, and of its first twenty years of work.

2. Name the Dioceses of the Province of South Africa in the order of their foundation, with the dates of the first and last, giving the state of things Bishop Gray found on his arrival in the Cape Colony.

3. Write a sketch of one of Bishop Gray's missionary journeys, and mention two or three other important ones.

4. What state of things did Bishop Gray leave in his own Diocese at his death in (*a*) Missionary work, (*b*) Synodical action, (*c*) Church Institutions?

Books recommended:—*Classified Digest of Records of S.P.G.* (7*s.* 6*d.*), S.P.G. Office, 19, Delahay Street, S.W.; *Under His Banner*, Tucker (5*s.*), S.P.C.K.; *The English Church in Other Lands*, Tucker (2*s.* 6*d.*), Longman; *Church Extension in the Colonies*, Tucker (2*d.*), S.P.G.; *Life of Robert Gray* (6*s.*), Longmans; *Africa Waiting*, by Thornton (2*s.* 6*d.*), S.V.M.U., 93, Aldersgate Street, E.C.; *Mission Heroes*, Bishop Gray (1*d.*), S.P.C.K.; *Bishop Gray's Journals*, S.P.C.K. (1*s.* and 1*s.* 6*d.*), S.P.C.K.; *Three Months' Visitation by the Bishop of Capetown*, Bell and Daldy (probably second-hand); *Collection of S.P.G. Maps* (19, Delahay Street).

Answers to be sent to Bog-oak Industrial School, Andover, by Feb. 1st.

ENGLISH HISTORY COMPETITION.

CLASS LIST FOR NOVEMBER.

CLASS I.

Gem and *Thames Valley*, 37; *Cobwebs*, 36; *Green Mantle*, 35; *Oka*, 34; *Double-Dummy*, 33.

CLASS II.

Maiden Aunt, 26.

GENERAL REMARKS.

In question 1, only *Green Mantle* (whose answer was not complete) pointed out that the French and English had exchanged advantages and disadvantages by the end of the war. France began with civil war, a country divided by factions, a demoralised army and an imbecile king, while the English had enthusiasm and a hero-king. By the end of the war England was on the verge of the Wars of the Roses; the king, if not imbecile, was incapable; the government was carried on by favourites or factions, and the army demoralised; while the French had gained enthusiasm, discipline; and Charles "*le bien servi.*"

The other questions were generally well answered. *Gem* and *Thames Valley* wrote distinctly good papers, obtaining full marks for III. and II. respectively.

Cobwebs obtained full marks for I. and II., and *Green Mantle* for II.

'MONTHLY PACKET' NOTICES.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The readers of the 'Monthly Packet' are invited to address CHELSEA CHINA on any subject the discussion of which occurs to them as likely to interest others, especially in connection with articles appearing in the Magazine.

CHINA CUPBOARD PRIZES—

A. *Variety Specimens.* Prize, monthly, 5*s.*
Search Questions (*Who, When, and Where*). Prize, for six months taken together, £1 1*s.*
Prose Competition. Monthly Prize, 5*s.*, or 10*s.*, according to merit.

RULES for the above—

(1) Papers must be sent by the 25th of each month, addressed to CHELSEA CHINA, care of Messrs. A. D. Innes & Co.; they must NOT be addressed to 'the Editors.' (2) Each envelope must be marked *outside* with the subject to which it refers. Papers under separate competitions or discussions must be in separate envelopes. (3) The correspondent's name and address must be written on every paper: the use of a *nom de plume* for the lists is optional. (4) If competitors fail to comply with any rule, their papers will be disqualified. (5) The real name of the prize-winner is published in each case. (6) There are no entrance fees. (7) Prizes cannot be taken by the same person twice in a half-year.

B. *English History Competition.* Prize, for six months taken together, £3 3*s.* Farther prizes only if the Editors are satisfied with the keenness of the competition.

RULES.—(1) Answers must be sent by the 25th of each month, addressed to CHELSEA CHINA, care of Messrs. A. D. Innes & Co. (2), (3), (4), (5) and (6) as above, under section A. Be very careful to put 'English History' *outside.*

C. *Church History Society.* Prizes of books are given. In value and number, these depend on the number of entries. They are given for the year's work, but Competitors who have only taken six months *may* have a prize awarded.

RULES.—I. This Society is open to all readers of the Magazine, by payment of an annual FEE of 1*s.* II. Questions are set each month.

No China Cupboard papers can be returned.

[*The Editors of the 'Monthly Packet' will feel obliged if All Contributors will write their names and addresses clearly on their MSS., and will enclose stamps for return. Unless these conditions are complied with, the Editors cannot undertake to preserve, return, or enter into correspondence about MSS. Much trouble is saved if accompanying letters are enclosed in the parcel instead of being sent separately.*

The utmost care is taken in returning MSS., but the Editors can only hold themselves absolutely responsible for such as are sent to them at their own request.]

THE MONTHLY PACKET.

NEW SERIES.

FEBRUARY, 1898.

THE GOSPEL WRIT IN STEEL.

BY ARTHUR PATERSON, AUTHOR OF 'FATHER AND SON,' 'FOR FREEDOM'S SAKE,' ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

THE night spent by John in fierce debate and struggle with himself was the most miserable Seth Cotton had known in a life which had not been a happy one. Seth's parents died when he was five years old. His father, the son of a well-to-do Cincinnati doctor, was a man of some character, but obstinate, impulsive, and vain. As a clerk in a wholesale store he began life with capital prospects, which he threw away to become a musician, partly because he believed himself to be a genius, but in the main to escape the drudgery of commercial life. He was talented, and persevering with the work he loved, but was unsuccessful, and when he married was but a teacher of music, living from hand to mouth. His marriage, though a reckless piece of improvidence, was the wisest thing he ever did in his life, for his wife was a woman of spirit, and really clever. Her bargain, poor thing, was a bad one, but she made the best of it; cultivated her voice, took singing engagements, and succeeded in supporting her husband and their child in comfort. In time they might have been well off, but one bitter winter Mrs. Cotton was seized with an affection of the throat, and died before the spring. Her husband did not survive her many months. He had loved her deeply in his passionate, selfish way, and the depression of mind after her death developed a latent heart complaint.

The only relation that remained to Seth was an aunt, his father's sister, an old maid, self-opinionated, dictatorial, and austere. She had quarrelled violently with her brother when he gave up business, and refused to see him when she heard that his wife was a 'public singer,' but at his death she did her duty by the child. Miss Cotton was wealthy, and all that money could buy was provided for Seth—but it was at a price. From the first his aunt chilled and awed him. In her presence he was as dumb as a mouse and nearly as timid. The only person he loved was his nurse. When he grew older the childish fear developed into antagonism of the bitterest kind. It was Miss Cotton's fixed intention that Seth should become a minister in the Episcopal Church, and he was educated solely with that view. Seth hated theology, abhorred the notion of becoming a preacher, and early in life determined that he would be a schoolmaster. It was a long, hard battle; but the boy won. He possessed his father's obstinacy and his mother's brains; and at one and twenty procured for himself a modest appointment in Chicago, and was told by his aunt that she never wished to see him again. He had deliberately thrown away a fortune of seventy thousand dollars. Seth, however, had a natural gift for teaching, and loved his independence. He steadily improved his position, and in two years had qualified himself to take the management of a school—as they existed in those days—single handed. Unfortunately Seth had one weakness, which was a serious drawback to his advancement in his profession, and in his four and twentieth year caused him to accept the offer of a less remunerative post in Chippewa. He was always falling in love. As a rule the affairs were not very serious, for it was Seth's misfortune to show his hand too soon, and propose before the young lady had thought about him in any other light than that of a pleasant acquaintance; consequently the flames of his affection were always being prematurely snuffed out. But it happened one day that the object of his misplaced attentions took offence, and complained to an indignant brother, who attacked Seth next day in the open street with a walking cane. The encounter ended by a sound castigation being administered to the aggressor. Seth's friends said he had done right; but he had to send in his resignation as instructor of youth in Chicago. He came to Chippewa in an exceedingly misanthropical condition of mind; nevertheless, he had not been there a week before he felt that in Jean Selby he had met

his fate. For a long time he worshipped her from afar, content to do so after his recent experiences, and throwing himself with all his might into his work at the school. By-and-by, however, he was able to make his first advance through a younger brother of hers, who became one of his scholars. They were soon fast friends; and Seth, warned by past blunders, and perceiving that Jean was of very different stuff from the pretty school teachers he had flirted with in former days, kept himself in order, and pursued the path of discretion. As a result he plunged into deeper water week by week. In six months he was over head and ears in love, and thought of little else. Everything he did, or tried to do—the books he read and the subjects he mastered—were for Jean. She had many interests, having, thanks to her mother, plenty of time at her disposal, and Seth made it his duty to keep pace with them all. Wherefore, on Jean's side, also, the friendship grew in strength as the months went by, and Seth became in her eyes a most agreeable and well-informed young man.

One thorn only lay in Seth's bed of roses, but that was a very big one—John Burletson. The first words about Jean which Seth heard when he settled down in Chippewa had been that she and this farming fellow were made for one another; and though he had made up his mind that those who said this should live to find themselves mistaken, the more he saw of John and knew of Jean the more the prophecy haunted him. In American country towns, in those days, the love affairs of the rising generation were looked upon by every one concerned—not excepting the parties themselves—from a common-sense, practical point of view, eminently unsatisfactory to a romancer. It was in the nature of things. The lads and lassies went to school together from their earliest days. Out of school hours they saw one another when and where they listed, and, as people seldom travelled much, they never lost sight of one another, and each was familiar with the weak points of his friend, her affinities and the reverse, long before she reached a 'marriageable age.' This was healthy on the whole. Lessons in those days were not made the cause of keen emulation or rivalry we often see now; boys and girls did not struggle feverishly for prizes, run hard brain races neck to neck, and lose year by year, in the bitterness of defeat, or exultation of victory—the boys in chivalry, the girls in refinement and simplicity. Moreover, out of school hours the lad was on the farm, the girl

in the house, and no opportunities existed for seeing too much of each other. Thus the love affairs of those days among the poorer middle classes usually came quietly and uneventfully, like seeking like. Only, now and then, into the quiet towns, would come men from other places, with roving eyes and hungry hearts, and then angry blood would rise and the story-tellers rejoice. So far, however, in the present case we are fain to confess nothing of the kind had occurred.

In the first place, Jean was not sentimental, and held out an open hand of friendship to both men; in the second place, it takes two to make a quarrel, and John was the most peaceable of men. As for Seth, he was one day in the depths of despair, the next on a pinnacle of hope. As the rumours of war grew stronger his friendship with Jean grew also, and their meetings became more frequent and lasted longer. The day before Sumter fell, Seth had been two hours with her discussing the situation. Then came Saturday evening, and Seth gave way to bitter despondency. He could not, though he tried, complain of Jean. She had been as sympathetic and as inspiring to him as ever; but to John she had been all this and something more. She had treated him with respect, deference even. She had yielded her judgment, which she had never done to Seth. Oh, it was bitter. And the worst of it was, he could find no fault, even with his rival. Burletson gave himself no airs, but was just the same simple, slow-speaking old John, only a trifle graver than usual. Angry and sore as Seth was, he found himself even sympathising with Jean's attitude towards his rival. 'I never liked the man better,' he said to himself. 'Confound him! what a good fellow he is, how straight he goes at a thing, and completely masters it—swallows it whole, so to speak, and chews it into pulp, before even he talks about it; yet as modest as a child. Thunder! but I will follow him to the death when the time comes. Heigh-ho! what an unlucky beggar I was to meet John here, and what a fool to think I should ever stand half a show when it came to fighting him!' At about this point in his reflections Seth fell asleep. He awakened late, and languidly ate his breakfast, finishing just in time to stroll over to the store at ten o'clock, where he was to meet John and Luke for a chat before meeting-time. As he went down the street he was surprised at the many cordial greetings he received from men with whom he had only been on nodding acquaintance hitherto, and presently he began to see that his speech last

evening had made a marked difference in his standing in the town. This cheered him immensely. His spirits rose at a bound, and by the time he greeted Mrs. Selby on his way to the room behind the store he had marked out for himself a distinguished military and political career. He loved Jean still; but life contained other things worth winning besides a woman's heart. The sound of a voice talking in loud angry tones arrested his attention, and brought him back to the present with a jar. He opened the door and looked round. His eyes were caught first of all by John standing by the table, his head bent, and his hands clasped behind his back, as they had been at the meeting. His face was grey and miserable, yet full of a determination which struck Seth at once, and remained in his memory after what followed as the deepest impression of all. Then Seth glanced at Jean. She was looking at John, an angry light in her eyes, which sent a sudden thrill of hope to Seth's heart. Her father, whom Seth saw last, was speaking. At Seth's entrance he brought his clenched fist down upon the table with a crash.

'There is time yet,' he cried, 'just time. Take your courage up again, and be a man. Can you, before Seth Cotton, here, show the white feather so? Do you want him to take your place with—with the boys, and *all else?* Do you think you can bide here without one self-respecting citizen among us all to touch your hand? By God! John, if you had not said this with your own tongue, and before Jean too, I would doubt my own ears and wits, sooner than believe it. That you, our John, as me and my wife have called you these many years, should turn in the path set before him, have the plough in the furrow, and deliberately go right back on his tracks—why, there, it must be a lie, and I can't believe it; I will not.'

It was a strange sight to see Luke Selby so completely thrown off his balance. Yet every man has a tender place somewhere, and Luke's had been touched this morning to the quick. For years he had watched John; had noticed his increasing interest in politics, his steady way of accumulating knowledge, and fitting himself to take a responsible part in whatever might have to be done. He knew how well he managed his business, and was as sure as Mrs. Burletson herself that he only wanted his opportunity to manage the affairs of others equally well. Naturally he had desired this man for his son-in-law, and viewed his growing affections for Jean with warmest approval. When

war became inevitable, and the sure way to win popular favour and renown was by arms, the idea of John getting a command in the volunteer army was quickly seized and made a certainty by Luke, and he held. himself ready to use every particle of political influence he possessed to ensure speedy promotion. When after all this he found that John threw it away, resigned his commission, refused even to volunteer, it was hardly wonderful that Luke Selby should for once lose his dignity and self-control.

There was silence for a moment, and then Seth said—

'What is the matter?'

He looked at Jean, and she replied in a dry, hard tone.

'We have had a surprise this morning, father and me. Have you come to tell us that business engagements will prevent you from going to the war?'

'How can you insult me by such an idea?'

She gave a bitter laugh.

'I told you we had been surprised. I might have said we do not feel like trusting any one again. I am sorry if I hurt you.'

'You have hurt me,' he answered shortly, instinctively feeling that now, if ever, his time would come. 'But never mind my feelings. I came to take orders from my superior officer. Captain, what is the news?'

He regretted afterwards having spoken in this way, for when John raised his eyes and looked at him, Seth saw such a world of suffering written in his face that he positively shivered.

'The news is this,' John answered, in the tone of a man weary beyond words. 'Circumstances since last night make it that I cannot go to the war. I have told these folk; now I tell you. I am sorry for all, because it will be upsetting, maybe, after what was said last night. But it has to be. When Luke has done I have some things to explain to you, Seth, before I go.'

Luke sat down with something like a curse.

'I ain't another word to say. But,' with a malicious smile, 'perhaps Jean has.'

'I have many, indeed,' she cried, then hesitated, as she met John's look. 'I mean,' she went on, with a catch in her breath, 'I cannot understand it, anyway. If, behind what you have said, there is some great reason holding you, it seems to me unnatural, unkind, cruel, that you should treat us this way, and give no sort of explanation. John, are you afraid?'

'I am not afraid.'

'Are you not?' sneered Luke. 'Then I never saw a man act cowardice better. Talk till you are dead, John, you will never convince me, after what I have seen to-day, that fear is not at the bottom of your mind.'

John turned on him suddenly.

'I did not lay myself out, Luke Selby, to convince you, or any other man. This is my business.'

His tone was not so gentle as it had been; he had borne about as much as he could stand.

'Jean,' he said in a lower tone, 'have you more to say?'

'I want to know *why?*'

'I have said, I cannot give my reasons.'

'Is it your mother? Now tell me that.'

'I cannot,' he answered, very slowly. 'I cannot tell you that.'

'Then,' she cried, nothing but the trembling of her hands to belie the cruelty of her words, 'you are not the man I believed you to be—oh, nothing of that man! And when you are in town about your business, remember, you will never, *never* trouble to come and speak to me.'

He winced for the first time, then, squaring his shoulders, turned to Seth.

'My words with you will not take long. You will be in my place—a gain in men. The only loss might have been my money; but that I reckon to make up. So here'—he took a paper from his pocket—'that is for arms, or what else they need. It is not much, but it is twice what I could have spared if I had been with them.'

Seth looked at the note and blushed.

'Say, John, this is hardly fair. Two thousand dollars—what does it all mean? Come, man'—his jealousy fading out before the suffering he saw in the stern face—'come with me and talk it over quietly. I will find some way, I know, to fix your scruples off. We want the man, not his money.'

But John turned away.

'Thank you, friend, for that; but I have no leisure to talk—it will be waste of time. The money is nothing. It belongs to the boys. Tell them so—from me.'

He took up his hat, and without a glance at Jean went quickly away. As he passed Seth he looked him steadily in the face—and they shook hands.

CHAPTER V.

FEELING ran very high in Chippewa when it was known that John had resigned the captaincy of the company, and was not going to volunteer at all. But for his many friends his personal safety would have been in danger when he came into town the next day. He was jeered at in the streets; boys threw stones at him, asked tenderly after his health, and called him 'home guard,' while many acquaintances cut him entirely, and even old friends passed him with the coldest of greetings. Only one man had a word to say in his favour, and laughed at the suggestion that he stayed at home from bodily fear. This was Seth. His motives were a little mixed, perhaps, for nothing was calculated to improve his own position more than generous championship of the man whose place he had taken; but he meant all he said, and found a real pleasure in his attempt to vindicate John. Not that he was successful. It was a time of wild enthusiasm; old friendships, even ties of blood, were forgotten, and the majority of people, whatever they did themselves, cried shame upon any man who refused to enlist for the war, while those who came forward were extolled by the platform orators and the press as heroes of rarest kind. As for Seth, he found himself a celebrity in a week. The local paper produced a fanciful sketch of his life, and prophesied that through his achievements Chippewa would become famous and world-renowned. In the same issue mention was made of John's gift to the company. He was duly thanked for his generosity, but not without an insinuation that he had done it to save his own skin. Seth read the paragraph just before he had made an appointment at the Selbys', and was so angry that he could not resist expressing his feelings to Jean. He met with a cold response.

'I am not convinced that the editor is wrong,' she said. 'No,' as Seth would have interposed, 'you need not trouble to tell me anything. I would be glad if you did not mention his name. I am so bitterly disappointed, that I would rather not hear anything about it. Our friendship is dead and done with. I could never respect a man again who could turn back, *from any cause*, when his country needed him, and his friends called him to the front as the boys called John. His being an old friend makes it worse. Indeed, I have put him out of my mind once for all. The war—and your plans—are what interest me. Tell me everything you can, you will never make me tired.'

Seth needed no second invitation. The first practical step the Government were taking was to send an officer of the regular army to inspect the volunteers and formally enrol them. They expected him daily. In the mean time Seth was learning his drill manual as fast as possible, and practising sword-exercise under the guidance of an old book on fencing he had picked up. A happy thought struck him that he would ask Jean to hear him his drill. She agreed at once, and from that day forth Seth was at the store every evening, and as Luke was very busy, and Mrs. Selby had her children to put to bed, these evenings were mostly spent with Jean alone.

Jean was not destined, however, to forget John as easily as she apparently wished to do.

'Jennie,' said her mother one afternoon, sitting down to sew at the table where Jean was poring over a newspaper, 'what is this your father tells me about you and John? Surely there can be no abiding quarrel between you and your oldest friend?'

Jean looked up from her reading with a flushed and angry face.

'Did not father tell you what he has done?'

'I understand that he don't feel like going to the war.'

'Isn't that enough? It is for me.'

Jean dashed her paper upon the table, smoothed it out with a rustle, and began to read again.

Mrs. Selby stopped sewing, adjusted her spectacles, and looked at her daughter with an expression of dumb surprise which Jean found exceedingly trying. It had not entered Mrs. Selby's head for years to question, much less find fault with, any opinion or action of Jean's. The girl was clever, high-spirited, and had received a good education—or her mother thought so—while Mrs. Selby believed herself to be the most stupid and most ignorant of human beings. Jean, so Mrs. Selby told her friends with simple pride, could talk politics like a man, and read books which her mother, when she peeped into them quietly, could not understand in the least. And Jean had opinions upon subjects of which girls were not allowed to speak in Mrs. Selby's youth, opinions chiefly concerning the position in the universe Providence had intended men—and women—to occupy. Mrs. Selby looked up with respect to mankind in general as long as they did not 'fuss round' the house. Jean seemed, in her mother's eyes, to consider men created to do the behest of women; and as most of the men they knew did what Jean told them without

a murmur, Mrs. Selby could not contradict her. John, it was true, had been an exception to this rule, and Mrs. Selby had secretly enjoyed the way he would at times stand squarely opposed to Jean and all her opinions, and had not failed to note that in the end he had gained respect and consideration by doing so. So much, indeed, had this been the case, that the news that Jean had cast his friendship away, and turned her back upon him as on one disgraced, gave a shock to Mrs. Selby's nature that roused her from her customary submissive attitude into determined attention.

'Jennie, my dear, I do not understand.'

Down went the paper upon the table again.

'No, nor does any one else; but it appears to be a fact.'

'I mean—I don't understand you.'

'Me! Why, mother, do you suppose I would have anything to do with a coward?—not if he were my own brother.'

'Who says John is a coward?'

Jean dropped her paper and looked up. She had never heard her mother speak in so stern a tone.

'Father said so.'

'He ain't mentioned the word to me.'

'He said it in John's presence.'

'What did the boy reply?'

'Denied it, of course. But when I asked him why he would not volunteer he refused to give any reason. Talk of being old friends! If he cared for that at all, he would not have treated me so. But he would say nothing—not a word.'

'I guess I know why that is,' Mrs. Selby said in a thoughtful tone; 'it's his mother—yet he keeps close about it, cos she would about die if she were to think he held back for her.'

A blush rose to Jean's face, and she started suddenly—then put the thought aside.

'That cannot be—I asked him direct. He said it was not.'

Mrs. Selby looked puzzled.

'I can't heft his reasons, then; but I am right sure they are good ones.'

'The only one I can think of is very bad—the fear of being killed.'

Jean spoke with withering scorn.

'Well, you know,' Mrs. Selby rejoined with exasperating coolness, 'I ain't sure that this may not be in it. John lives a useful life; he has his mother to support, and a rare big farming

business. It would be more than foolish—I would call it wicked—if he went off to the war unless he had to go. And that is far from being so; Luke says the boys all around the North are gettin' mad to fight. There will be plenty without him.'

'Thank Heaven! yes,' cried Jean, so irritated and angry at her mother's attitude, that she could have slapped her. 'There are brave men left. If one disappoints us, there is always another to take his place.'

Mrs. Selby sighed helplessly.

'I do not understand one little bit. Seems as if you want John to be killed. Is that it?'

'Mother!' Jean stamped her foot. Then by a great effort controlled herself, snatched up her paper, and went to her room, locking herself in, and walking up and down to cool.

'How stupid she is—how stupid!' she said aloud. 'I don't know what I shall do or say one of these days if she goes on so. It is wrong, horribly wrong, to think this way of one's mother; but I cannot help it. It is true. What can be worse than this?—because I want John to be a man, she supposes that I wish he was dead; or that I am picking a hole because I want to quarrel! I want to quarrel? Why, I would give—what would I not give to have things as they were before? I am miserable—miserable—I mean I hate that he should have turned out so. Should I be so bitter, does she think, if I had not cared so much? But there, it is over. To worry about it any more is quite absurd. If John is a coward, Seth turns out different from anything I had expected. These times of trial do test a man. The heat and stress shrivels up one, but it makes another greater and nobler than he could ever be without it. But dear, dear, what can the time be? I promised to meet Seth at five; he will have been waiting quite a while.'

She laved her face in cold water, and then examined her eyes in the glass, and frowned. They were distinctly red.

At the Burletson homestead in these stirring days life went much as usual. Mrs. Burletson never drove to town except on Sundays, and knew nothing at the time of the reception John had encountered. John had made little of it even to himself After what Jean had said, the opinions of his friends and the gibes of the rest were nothing. Yet her words were what he had expected. He had not realised beforehand all that it would mean to him. His chief anxiety was to prevent his

mother knowing what he suffered, and especially to guard against the least suspicion that he had made the sacrifice for her. At first he despaired of this. Mrs. Burletson was an exceedingly transparent person; and John saw that, though she said nothing after he had told her he could not volunteer, she had made up her mind that he wanted to go, and he suspected that she was only keeping quiet because her busy brain was thinking of some way to bring it all about. But, as it happened, a new turn was given to Mrs. Burletson's ideas by the very thing John had carefully concealed from her—what was said of him in town. The news was told to her by the Reverend Septimus Haniman, their minister, the kindliest of men, who thought that she ought to know it. He did it very gently; but no delicacy of handling could remove the significance of the slight to John—and at the notion that he was misunderstood Mrs. Burletson caught fire.

'Is that what they say?' she exclaimed in a tone that caused Mr. Haniman to hunt for his hat, and make up his mind that he was urgently wanted at home. 'They dare to call my son a coward! They dare! Then I quit, at once and for always, what I had in my mind to do. I had thought of taking a place in a boarding-house, and so fixing things that John could not but leave here unless he wanted to live alone—for I am sure that my comfort is in his mind, whatever else lays there as well—but now I will not do it. No; such mean, pitiful-minded folk as these shall never drive him from his home. Even Luke Selby? I never trusted that man's face. I wonder what Jean—but never mind. I do not consider the opinion of any man or woman in Chippewa worth anything now. Going, Mr. Haniman? Then see, good friend, should you happen, as you must, to be in conversation with those who have spoken so about John, tell them from me that I should feel honoured if they would come to see me, and say to my face what they talk about behind his back. I will guarantee, Mr. Haniman, that I would find ways to cause every one to regret that he had ever opened his slanderous lips. Good afternoon to you.'

Then Mr. Haniman escaped, thankful and a little out of breath. But though for weeks afterwards Mrs. Burletson religiously donned her best black silk gown and prepared to receive callers, nobody ever came. She did not say much to John. Deep and true as their love was for one another, John was too reserved to ever speak, even to his mother, of the wound Jean's

hand had given him, and Mrs. Burletson, though aching to know all about it, never dreamed of asking questions. She saw that from that day forth John worked as she had never known him work before, and that when he spent an hour with her in the evenings he was silent and absent-minded, and took little interest in anything but the newspapers. If this hurt her at times, she never let him see it. In his presence she was always bright and cheerful, and his sore heart was comforted in its bitter pain by the thought that she, at least, was happy.

One evening, a month from that never-to-be-forgotten Sunday morning, he came in earlier than usual, and after supper drew his chair close to her and kissed her.

'Mother, I have been poor company of late.'

'Your work, John, has taken up the time. I never wish that you should give up that for me.'

'It was a bitterness in my heart that made me work so. I have been very bitter.'

'You have had cause,' she said between her teeth.

'Hush! do not say that. It is not true, either, for I had nothing less to expect. I see that now, now that the worst—the worst for me, I mean—has come. I was foolish to worry. And so far as it has taught me my folly, this blow has done me good.'

Mrs. Burletson looked up anxiously.

'The worst? what does that mean? I thought the worst had come before.'

'I thought so too; I was wrong.' He stooped to pick up her ball of worsted. 'Jean—Jean has become engaged to be married, mother, to Seth, the schoolmaster.'

Mrs. Burletson sat perfectly still in her chair, but he felt her stiffen all over.

'How do you feel, son? Do it crush you—or what?'

He did not reply. His fingers were busy with the worsted ball, which had come unwound.

'Tell me how you feel, John.'

'It is not easy,' he said at last, carefully keeping his face from her. 'It seems strange—kind as if I were dreaming. For Jean, you know, has seemed always, even since that day I told her I could not go to the war, to belong to me. Yet the news is true, and reasonable enough. I believe it is right, though I cannot see it that way.'

He sighed, then took his mother's hand, and stroked it lovingly.

'Never mind; I have you. You are worth them all.'

'I am not, John. Though I may be worth something while I live, I am very old and ailing. For long, very long now, I have looked to Jean—though I never thought her worthy of my boy—to make you happy, when the Lord took me. Now, what is to be when I am gone? Who will comfort and care for you? Oh, she is——'

'Don't, mother.'

Mrs. Burletson looked dangerous.

'I must speak my mind, John. I will to her some day. If you are not bitter, I am for both of us. What does it all mean? Do you tell me she has done this because you refused to volunteer?'

'That was the beginning. Jean, you know, has strong views.'

'She has no heart, John, and little sense. There, I will stop. But God is very hard upon you, my own boy. Yet I pity her—she does not know what she has lost. She was never worthy of you. God knows that. Yet it is hard, for I cannot live much longer, and you are not a man to live alone.'

'I shall be one of many. See, now, let us face it, and look at a brighter side. We will have great times, you and I. I shall get home earlier from work than I have done, and we will read together. The present is ours, mother. The future, as you have often told me, need not be taken till it comes.'

He kissed her, and she leant against his shoulder, while the shadows of the evening darkened around them.

'My precious son,' she whispered tremulously, 'you are my life. It is all the world to me to have you here. I would not have said it if I thought there would be any chance now that you'd wish to go to the war. But as things are, I may tell you all my mind. I do not think, John, I would have lived a month from the day you started South.'

CHAPTER VI.

THE spring of 1861, after the taking of Fort Sumter, was a time when the feelings of every American were wrought up to the highest pitch. From day to day, from hour to hour, people were expecting to hear news of national significance. There was the danger to Washington; the plots to assassinate Mr. Lincoln; the secession of Virginia when demand was made

upon her to supply her quota of militia ; the riots in Baltimore, when the first regiment of Northern troops, the 6th Massachusetts, passed through on their way to protect Washington. All these things, with a thousand rumours—laughable now, terribly serious then—were poured upon the public by the press, week after week, until excitable people could scarcely eat or sleep, and thought and dreamt of nothing but the war. Jean was one of these. Under the guidance of her closest friend, Mrs. Haniman, the minister's wife, she had been imbibing abolitionist literature of the most extreme type for a long while. When the time for action came she would have given worlds to have been a man, and could only comfort herself by urging every man she knew to volunteer. The enthusiasm and fire in Seth's nature was an infinite support to her. He seemed to read her thoughts, and say and do just those things she expected from him at such a time. Then he was to command the company. He seemed, in her eyes, to have grown in dignity and power ; and while others—men twice his size—spoke of him with respect as one who would be a leader of men, there was a delightful secret consciousness in Jean's heart that she was leading him ; that every important step he took was referred to her first for approval, and sometimes was her own suggestion. She was realising a dream of her life, and directly influencing the lives of others. With this feeling, however, there came the consciousness that there could only be one end to it all. Seth's face was an open book, and days before he declared himself Jean knew what was coming. At any other time, impulsive as she was, Jean would have hesitated before she pledged her life to one whom until very lately she had only thought of as a friend, and not the most valued of her friends. Many who knew her were astounded when they heard of the engagement, for no one had ever thought of Jean as inclined to marriage. In this they were right ; but it is a fact, not often recognised, that in times of excitement the girl who has never dreamt of marrying makes the first plunge.

The news was taken by Luke Selby with the philosophical resignation characteristic of a properly constituted American parent.

'It is not the choice I would have made,' he said to his wife. 'John was the man. He has more brains in one finger than there is in Seth's head. John, if he had behaved as he ought, would have been top of the tree before this war played out.

Curse his foolishness! 'Tis that which has done it all. But you cannot get away from facts. He went back on his bond—leastways climbed out after I'd helped him in—while Seth played up to the music, and put in at the right moment. We must make the best of it, Martha. There's one thing—Jean holds Seth as tight as I hold my store, and with her eternal energy will keep him waltzing to time. If Seth don't continue to make things jig, he will get blue brimstone for his wife.'

To all of which wisdom Mrs. Selby had replied—

'Jean is a woman—or thinks she is. But she is a fool. Will ye have baked apple-fritters again for supper, or are you tired of them?'

Luke turned in his chair and looked at his wife with interest.

'Martha, your feelings must have been many to have crowded out such words as these. Wait, I say, wait and see how things eventuate. I have heard that folks get shot sometimes when they go to war. Jean will be older and wiser, maybe, later on.'

In the afternoon of this day, only twenty-four hours after Seth had won his victory, a man in blue uniform alighted from a western bound train at the Chippewa depôt, and inquired the way to Selby's store.

'My name is Simpson,' he said to Luke, in a decidedly abrupt and not over-polite tone, as the store-keeper advanced with his blandest smile. 'I have authority from Colonel Peck, commanding the 2nd Wisconsin Regiment of volunteers, to enrol the men of this town whose names are down for enlistment. I was referred to you.'

'I am proud to make your acquaintance, major,' Luke answered, extending a hand of friendship, which, however, the soldier failed to see. A military man of the old school, Major Simpson looked upon civilians of Luke Selby's type with a dislike too deep for words. 'A blasted political wire-puller,' was his inward comment. 'I will have no truck with him.' And he kept his word. At this moment Seth, who had run post-haste to the store when he heard of the major's arrival, came up. Luke turned to him with relief.

'Major, this gentleman is in command of the company—allow me to introduce——'

'I have heard of him,' Major Simpson said with a slight change of manner; 'Mr. Burletson, I presume. Well, sir, are there many, think you, of the boys here who will pass a doctor's

examination and stand company drill? I have met precious few so far.'

Seth blushed.

'My name is Cotton, sir—major, I mean. John Burletson resigned, and the boys elected me.'

'Did they so?' said the major with a grim arch of the eyebrows. 'You feel honoured, no doubt. Unfortunately it is my duty to inform you, Mr. Cotton, that in our regiment all who enlist begin from the ranks. Promotion, if it comes, will only commence after service in the field and for special merit. Now to business. Step this way, will you, please?'

This was a direct hint to Luke that his presence was not desired. The store-keeper was highly indignant, and felt disposed, he said afterwards, to question then and there Major Simpson's authority, and send in a strong complaint of his behaviour to head-quarters. That he did not do the first may be accounted for by certain inflexibility about the major. To attack him would be rather too much like striking a piece of cold iron; while the second course, though comforting to think of, was not easy to put into practice. So for the time, at any rate, Luke made the best of it, retired to his business, and swallowed his pride, while the major and Seth went outside the store.

'Have you seen service?' the major said.

'I have read a good amount, and am nearly through learning my drill manual.'

'Drill fiddlestick!' was the testy answer. 'Exactly what I expected. Lucky our colonel is a man of sense, and that we can find officers who know something. What most of the army will be like the devil only knows, with officers holding command at the pleasure of their men, and whose knowledge begins and ends with a book. Let me see these boys. To-morrow the doctor will be here, and my drill-sergeant. Do you suppose we shall get a dozen to stay when they find we mean business? Speak your mind, lad.'

He looked Seth up and down, measuring him with one shrewd glance.

'I guess most of them will stay. We mean business, too; as for myself, it was not at my request they made me captain.'

'Well said,' grunted the major. 'I am glad to hear that. It may come, you know, in a better way. Are those the men?'

The news of the 'army-major's' arrival had flown through town, and the company to a man had collected round the store —many of its younger members first embracing their mothers and sisters, under a vague impression that they were going to the front that afternoon.

'Put them through their facings,' the major said, with another quick glance at his companion. 'Let me see how far you have brought them.'

Seth went hot all over. This Major Simpson was a little man, a head and shoulders shorter than himself, but in his squarely set figure, alert bearing, severe eyes, and sarcastic smile, there was a suggestion of power and superior knowledge that was most unnerving. Then the boys! For two weeks Seth had struggled, two hours daily, to get them into line—and keep them there—and persuade them to attempt the simplest of evolutions. There were countless difficulties, the chief one being that few would drill more than half an hour at a time. They said they were tired, and either sat down to smoke or strolled off for a drink, returning to their places later on—from the strongest sense of duty, they said—only to make the confusion of the rest worse confounded. This afternoon, under the eye of the major, who stood at a little distance looking on with frozen imperturbability, the gallant volunteers of Chippewa made tremendous efforts to do credit to their captain and themselves. Only once did an elderly man, a tailor by trade, who was hard of hearing and irritable, ask Seth to 'holler louder.' No one offered to leave the ranks or even suggested that his throat was dry. Sturdily they stood and did their very best. A motley crowd. Here a man in silk-hat, broadcloth, and fine linen; next him a farmer, in flannel shirt and blue-jean pants; a clerk, weedy and pasty-faced, with delicate fingers; a labourer, dirty, ragged, and hard-handed; a lad of seventeen, the doctor's son; Luke's cashier, a rheumatic bachelor of fifty; men of every rank and every age, yet all animated with the same spirit—willing to leave their homes and give their lives for the Union cause.

Never will Seth forget that day. He had a good memory and a good voice, but he could not make others do what, except in theory, he had never done himself. It was a time of bitter torture to him, while his men, rather pleased with themselves, wheeled and marched at the word of command—in different directions; came to attention in a variety of ways—none of

them correct; saluted when told to 'dress by the right;' and, worst of all, came into violent collision with one another at the words 'right about turn.'

'It has been the poorest kind of show,' he said hoarsely to the major when the men were at last dismissed. 'I guess drilling is not in me.'

'It will be in you as much as any one else when you have been taught,' was the reply, in so kindly a tone, that Seth could have hugged him. 'If you cannot handle men, you will a musket. To-morrow my sergeant shall take hold of this awkward squad. He'll wring them into shape in good time. There is better stuff among your folk than I expected. You will see what drilling means when Silas Horrocks comes.'

Seth did see. First, in the morning, every man was examined by a sharp-voiced military surgeon, who sent a fourth of them back to their homes as useless for service, deeply hurting their susceptibilities. In the afternoon came the sergeant, a big man with a voice of brass, a will of iron, the patience of an angel, and the eye of a New York detective.

'He put us through that blasted drill,' said one of the 'squad' afterwards, 'until the perspiration shone on our coat-tails. If war makes a man as thirsty as that sergeant, I guess we'll drink the Potomac dry when we get there. There ain't one mite of gilt-edge left to this volunteering biz, you bet your life on that.'

At muster the following day many brave volunteers who had cheered themselves hoarse when Sumter fell, were missing—most of them giving notice that their mothers required them more than their country. The majority, however, stuck to the flag; while as for Seth, he renounced all desire or claim to be an officer, and took his place with perfect good humour as a private in the ranks. Jean was at first very indignant that he should have been obliged to do this, and suffered a keen sense of personal disappointment and annoyance; but she acknowledged that he had played the part of a sensible man, and soon persuaded herself that he would be speedily promoted when his real qualities as a leader began to show themselves. A week later Major Simpson drafted his Chippewa recruits to a camp twenty miles east, where, separated from business, relations, and love affairs, they settled down to drill in earnest. It was hard and weary work for them. At first the men grumbled because they had no rifles. 'It seemed poor mean soldiering,'

they said, 'to fool around with nothing in one's hands.' When the arms came the complaints were louder than before, because the rifles were so heavy. Then they had a spell of wet weather, and drilled in a pool of mud; and the food was rough and hard, and some fell sick. At last, after a month had gone, and the men were losing their awkwardness, and their officers regaining their tempers, orders came that the 2nd Wisconsin was to go to the front. The news was received with heartfelt cheers. At last the deadly drill was over, the monotony of doing every day exactly what had been done the day before; the drudgery and weariness of learning by constant practice that which appeared so easy, and turned out to be so hard—especially for those past their first youth—was at an end. The first campaign was to begin; 'On to Washington!' was the cry. Seth, with many others, got leave of absence the last day, and spent it in Chippewa. It was the first time he had been in town in uniform, and most devoutly did he wish that it had been a better fit. His trousers, loose and baggy, were too long, and had no 'shape' at all; his forage-cap, with its straight pasteboard peak and a top like a crushed concertina, was a severe trial to him; his overcoat, which he had to wear, as it was raining, was far too big—the collar up to his ears, the sleeves down to his finger-tips. But it was a *uniform*—the visible sign that he was one of those set apart, going to the war. People shook hands with him in the street. The boys cheered rapturously, and Jean, clinging to his arm, with shining eyes, thought no one looked more soldierlike and handsome. And through the weary weeks that followed, on the day of battle, and, worse still, the day after, Jean's farewell kiss and parting words were an unfailing comfort and stimulus to Seth. He loved her now with all his soul and strength, and he went back to camp that night determined to prove himself to be, if not the hero she believed, at least a lover of whom she should never be ashamed. Seth could see that Jean valued him at more than he was worth—so much the past few weeks had taught him. He was not, and probably never would be, a commander of men, and yet it was that above everything that Jean expected him to be. But after all, there were chances in the game of war no man might calculate. He would do his best; he would never turn his back upon the enemy—the rest lay in God's hands.

It was a drizzling, cold and miserable evening when the regiment prepared to embark upon the train that was to take

them south. A number of the relations of the men had come to the depôt at Marathon to see the last of them. Seth had no one. Luke Selby said he was too busy to get so far; Mrs. Selby could not leave her little ones; and Jean, though willing enough, could not go alone. It came about, therefore, that Seth, as he waited on the platform with the rest, stood alone, while the boys around him chatted with fathers and brothers, sweethearts or wives. A wretched choky sensation tickled the back of his throat, and he walked away from the rest, feeling very forlorn and lonely. It was a little hard that there should not be one hand held out to him, one voice to wish him God-speed. Truly he was a solitary dog, and, but for Jean, not a soul cared whether he lived or died. 'And even Jean,' he said to himself in a momentary fit of bitterness, 'will she mourn long? I guess not. Burletson is there, and when the war is done I shall be forgotten, and his day, and the days of all other "home-guards," will come. A cursed cowardly set.' He set his teeth savagely, then coloured to the brim of his forage-cap, for he saw a familiar figure pushing its way towards him through the crowd—John himself.

'I came around here to see you,' John said. 'If you are engaged with others, I will go at once. I only came for a grip of the hand.'

'You are just welcome,' Seth answered huskily. 'I feel lonesome as a boy left at his first school. But you will have many to see beside me.'

'I came to you,' John answered in a quiet tone. 'No one else at all. We have not met since I heard of your engagement, and I felt I would not wish you to go away without one word from me, because——' He paused, then went on, looking Seth straight in the face all the time, 'Jean is my oldest friend, and, until two months since, the most intimate I had. I feel, therefore, kind of especially interested in her. It makes no difference that she is not interested in me. You are a fortunate man, Seth. How do these rifles act?'

'We stand first in the regiment there,' Seth said warmly, studying John's face, and noticing many things, particularly how firm the lines about the mouth had grown. It was a grand, strong face.

'John,' he cried, 'you should be where I am now—only that you would hold a commission. Why, *why* did you hold back—why the devil did you—you, the best of us all?'

Camp life had not improved the refinement of Seth's speech. But his vehemence was heartfelt. John coloured slightly.

'I had my reason, and that reason stays with me now as it did then. Never mind me. I am dead and buried. It is you who are alive. I trust you'll come through gaily. I know it will not be second best.'

The hearty words warmed Seth's quick enthusiasm.

'I will try—enough, if only for her sake. A man who failed with Jean behind him would be a skulk indeed. I beg your pardon,' suddenly recollecting who he was speaking to. 'That was real mean of me.'

John laughed, a genuine laugh, and slapped Seth on the shoulder.

'Come, come, I am not such sugar-candy as that amounts to, if I am a "home-guard." There's the bugle. Are you off?'

'Yes; see, the train has been switched in. It will be good-bye in real earnest now.'

They walked to the cars, and Seth swung in and took up a place near the door, his comrades passing him. They were mostly Chippewa men, and seeing John, greeted him in so friendly a manner, that he was quite overcome. He had steeled his heart by this time to the silent contempt and coldness of his fellow-townsmen. He had begun to take it as a matter of course. This behaviour on the part of the boys themselves almost unmanned him. On their side his familiar face reminded them of home; his resignation of the captaincy was a thing of the past, while his gift of money, which had given them an advantage over their comrades, was vividly present in their minds. The consequence was, that when the men were in their places, crowding at the windows, and a shrill-voiced lad shouted, 'Three cheers for Johnny Burletson's rifles!' they hurrahed with a will.

'All aboard!' was the cry now, and the train began to move. Seth stretched half his body through the window, and shook hands for the last time.

'Good-bye,' he cried. 'Take care of her till I get back, if I ever do. God bless you, John—Good-bye.' The train moved faster. The crowd on the platform cheered; the soldiers answered; then from Seth's carriage some one struck up 'John Brown's body.' In a moment the song was caught up by a hundred voices, and to the sound of 'Glory, glory, Hallelujah!'

sung in all sorts of keys to no time at all, the train with its great cargo of flesh and blood departed on its way, and John, turning back to where he had left his horse—for he had ridden all the way to be in time—hid his face on the good beast's neck, and sobbed like a child.

(*To be continued.*)

WOMEN'S PUBLIC WORK.

II.—POOR-LAW CHILDREN.

THE children are the hopeful part of Poor-Law work. It may too often be a disheartening task to deal with the hardened casual, the confirmed drunkard, the shameless impostor, the weak and shiftless; but we cannot despair of the children, and to give them a chance—ay, and a good chance—is perhaps the most important, as it is the most interesting, work to which a guardian of the poor can set his or her hand.

At the end of 1896 there were in round numbers 60,000 children under the absolute control of the guardians, in workhouses, schools, or placed by them in training homes, including 5000 boarded out and 182,000 more for whom the guardians are partially responsible.

It is impossible to insist too strongly on the serious responsibility which attaches to all who have to deal with this mass of the young life of the country. What manner of bringing up shall be prescribed for these little waifs and strays? How can they best be turned into good and useful citizens? How may we avoid the danger of their growing up familiarised with the idea that they are paupers, and that to swell the ranks of the destitute is their birthright?

Public opinion has long recognised that the worst possible way of dealing with our little paupers is to bring them up within the walls of the workhouse. The practice still prevails in some county unions, but the number of children thus provided for diminishes every year.

A great workhouse is a dismal place. Its blank, whitewashed walls and passages, its hideous uniforms, its monotonous tasks and unappetising food, the atmosphere of failure and degradation hanging about it, must exert a blighting influence upon young and impressionable lives. At one time children were habitually sheltered in these prison-like abodes, mixing indiscriminately with every grade of the criminal class, and with the

dregs of the population. Even now, when the deadly effect of such intercourse has long been recognised, and when every effort is made to prevent it, it has been authoritatively stated that it is found hopeless to guard children within the workhouse from moral contamination. They overhear gossip, they come into contact with pauper attendants. The greatest danger of all lies in their little companions. Inspectors, visitors, and workhouse officials generally, testify to the appalling amount of harm done in this way. Intercourse with the children who come in with their parents from time to time, and who are known as 'ins-and-outs,' forms the only variety in dull lives, and is the only channel by which knowledge of the outer world comes to the workhouse child. These children who come in many times a year belong to the lowest class. They go out to beg, to steal, to live in various haunts, and come back to recount their adventures and to sow a fresh crop of evil in most receptive soil. It need surprise no one that when the time comes for launching the little pauper on the world, he or she is destitute of practical knowledge, ignorant of the names of common things, or of the value of money; but that the sheltered life has failed to provide a compensation in the shape of ignorance of the worst kinds of evil.

The picture drawn in 'Oliver Twist' was not an exaggerated one at that time. Inquiries made in 1841 and 1856, revealed a state of things in our large workhouses that surprised those who had not realised what is the inevitable result of giving unlimited power over the weak and helpless, to any uncontrolled body. Great cruelties were sometimes practised on the friendless and unhappy little orphans. Cases of shameful ill-treatment came to light. In some instances evidence was supplied by children who had left the schools, and who did not dare to complain till long after of the conduct which a master or mistress had been pursuing for years. The little victims grew up stunted in mind and body, knowing nothing of childish joys, or happy family intercourse: small wonder that many a dying father or mother found their bitterest pang in the thought that the bright innocent child, whom they had striven to preserve from contact with evil, and to bring up with decent habits, was fated to 'come to the House.' Where it is still the custom to keep children in the workhouse the harm is to some extent minimised by sending them out to be educated in the elementary schools. In this way they are brought into contact with the outer world for

some hours of every day. They work with respectable companions, a higher standard of education is maintained, and the teachers are of a better class; but that the plan does not always succeed as fully as one would wish is apparent, from the evidence of an ex-board school teacher before the late Poor-Law Commission, who gave a pathetic picture of the parish contingent, distinguished by its ugly uniform, and its timid apathetic bearing, herding together in play-hours, and 'never seeming to play with the others.'

When, fifty years ago, the disadvantages of workhouse training were first borne in strongly upon the public mind, the plan of draughting off the little paupers into large district schools, built specially for the purpose, was looked upon as a marked improvement. The charges of several unions were added together, numbers and organisation exercised the fascination they possess over many minds, and on the principle that you cannot have too much of a good thing, it seemed accepted that the schools could hardly be too big. Barrack-schools, a name by which these great institutions have now attained unenviable notoriety, were erected for 1500 children at Sutton, for 1100 at Hanwell, for 900 at Witham, and in other districts for numbers varying from 200 to 800. In a short time seven or eight thousand children were gathered into these huge institutions.* Visitors waxed enthusiastic over the admirable system. 'It makes my eyes fill,' said one worthy guardian, 'to see a long procession of these little dears entering the dining-room.' The drilling, the swimming-baths, the singing-classes, edified the beholder, who saw hundreds of children, dressed alike, obeying their teachers' lead with the precision of machines, and it was long before it was borne in on those responsible for them that the system was in fact one for creating machines; and that, strange to say, machines were found wanting in the power to do the work of men and women in the world. Picture to yourself a little child taken from its little cottage home and merged among hundreds in one of these great barracks. He sleeps in a dormitory with some fifty others. He is no longer Johnny or Bobby, but a number. His teachers do not even know his name. He rises, goes to bed, learns, eats, and plays by rule. He has no personal possessions, the girls have not even a pocket to their frocks, and even the clothes on

* There are at the present time about 14,000 children in district and separate schools.

their backs that go to the wash are returned indiscriminately. Little brothers and sisters only meeting for an hour once a week, sit and stare at one another in the bare hall and become shy and estranged. Even games are hopeless with such numbers and in limited space, and it is not surprising to hear that the children will not play unless a master starts a game; that they are sullen and spiritless, that they lack resource, vitality, and individuality. They are strangers to the common objects of everyday life. One of them, who was taken for a walk, had never seen a bridge, and was afraid to step upon it. Another, on going to service, stood gaping when told to fetch a cup, her experience having been strictly limited to mugs. Girls are set to peel potatoes, which are cooked by the hundredweight in a copper. They scour miles of asphalte flooring, they wash up hundreds of tin plates and spoons; but they see nothing whatever of the thousand little needs of daily life, they know nothing of the 'stitch in time,' they acquire none of the handiness that comes from 'tidying up for mother' or getting granny's tea, or turning, contriving, running errands to the shop. We can well understand a mistress, who said that one of these girls could scour the kitchen floor, but when told to make her kitchen 'look nice,' had not the most hazy idea what was meant by the order.

These great district schools are open to objections which some may consider yet graver. They had not been many years in working order before the ill effects upon health of congregating masses of children became apparent. A want of vitality was the inevitable result of the unwholesome and artificial life, and a crop of diseases broke out which found a fruitful soil in the offspring of the ill-nourished, the weak and helpless, or the hereditarily vicious. Such diseases as ringworm, ophthalmia, skin and throat complaints, found their most congenial home in these huge pauper schools; and after several terrible visitations of ophthalmia—that most infectious and disabling of complaints—a special report was issued in 1874. This gave eighty per cent. of the children as infected, the sight of nine per cent. was permanently injured, twenty-two had lost the sight of one eye, while two were quite blind. Energetic measures were taken, greater cleanliness was enforced, an ophthalmic infirmary was erected, and the scourge has to a great extent been checked; though, in spite of every effort, Dr. Stephenson's report for 1897 shows that 234 inmates of district schools have the sight of one

eye permanently injured, and are to that extent additionally handicapped in what is already likely to be an uphill fight in life.

Great efforts have been made by boards of guardians of late years to modify the unnatural conditions of these schools, and no one will deny that they have been very much improved. In some the children are allowed to play in open spaces, instead of asphalte courts. The numbers have been broken up into blocks. The uniforms of the girls have been varied and made less distinguishing. In several pet animals are allowed. At Mitcham, boys who have good-conduct marks are allowed to go beyond the school grounds by themselves. Gardening has become more general. Small training kitchens have been established, in which, at least, some of the girls going to service can be taught for a few months. Many more amusements have been provided, and a real attempt at humanising these institutions has had a measure of success, especially where boys are concerned. At Swinton, in Lancashire, boys are trained for military bands, and the demand for these is in excess of the supply. Boys seem better fitted than girls for educating in large numbers. As one witness remarked, 'A boy's Eton is all right; but a girl's Eton is unthinkable'—an Eton, too, it must be remembered, without holidays or the influences of home. The training-ships for boys are a particularly successful form of district school. In these ships, of which there are four, the boys learn all the practical part of a seaman's duty—to shorten sail, to steer, to heave the lead; they are taught the parts of a ship, and make trial trips. They also learn something of tailoring and shoe-patching, and are in great request both for the Merchant Service and the Royal Navy. A practice also prevails of apprenticing little boys to the masters of fishing-smacks; and though many of these care kindly for their hands, one cannot but feel that it is one which above all needs the vigilance of guardians. Life on the North Sea is at best a rough one for a young boy, and rumours reach one from time to time which raise grave doubts as to whether these apprentices are sufficiently safeguarded.

The drawback of even the best of the district schools is that everything is *done for* the children. No scope is allowed for imagination and initiative. There can be no wandering in streets or lanes with a child's dreams or love of adventure, no little plans can be made, no fancies indulged, no experiments tried, and scarcely a breath from the outer world can reach those who,

at sixteen, are to be thrust forth to fend for themselves with every prop withdrawn.

The evidence given before the Poor-Law Commission in 1896 proves that many of those who were formerly strenuous advocates of the schools are falling out of love of them, and that to an increasing extent they are being replaced by the cottage home or village community. The children belonging to Kensington and Chelsea are housed at Banstead, in Surrey; the Shoreditch children at Hornchurch; the Birmingham ones at Marston Green. Instead of one vast building, or four or five blocks, we find small detached houses built on each side of a short road. A little church and school, and a house for the teachers, and the master's house and garden, combine to form a cheerful village. Each house contains from twenty-five to forty children, under the charge of a foster-mother. The boys' cottages have a father and mother in charge. The girls help in the housework, and some freedom is allowed. The health of the occupants is usually satisfactory, and they look happy and well cared for; but though this system is much to be preferred to that of the unwieldy schools, when all is said and done the village is a pauper village still. The size of each house is beyond that of any real home; the beautiful order, the cleanliness and organisation visible everywhere, are unnatural; the children meet none but poor-law companions at school, at church, at play. The result is that a boy or girl reared in what must still be called an institution, goes forth into the world with the sense of belonging to a class strong upon him or her.

The Sheffield scheme is a fresh development of the isolated homes system, and one which the Whitechapel guardians are now maturing, has some new features. Sheffield places fifteen children in each cottage. Whitechapel will limit the number to ten, and will mix the girls and younger boys. The Sheffield guardians do not allow the children to enter the workhouse even for a day, but have a special home for their temporary reception. The children go to the neighbouring elementary schools, not more than thirty being sent to any one school. The cottages are scattered through town or country, and the inmates attend the ordinary church, chapel, and Sunday school, according as their parents' religion can be ascertained. A visitor to one of the Sheffield Homes says, 'You would never set the children down for a set of little paupers; there is nothing to suggest it. The clothes have nothing distinctive about them; the hair is not

cropped; the faces look bright and intelligent. There is no locked gate; and on going indoors there is no bare institution room, no long array of dormitories, but an ordinary day-room and kitchen, with bedrooms for four or five, where each child has a box for its own clothes and little possessions.'

The Sheffield guardians employ a superintendent who visits the cottages constantly. By the Whitechapel plan, an educated lady, probably a trained nurse, will be appointed to this post, and her house will be the infirmary. A neighbourhood will be chosen where existing industries are likely to absorb many of the children in after-life. A brick-making centre has already been fixed upon, where the demand is always great for boys and young men. Another site surrounded by market gardens is under consideration. In many depopulated parts of the country, or near county towns, these communities will come as welcome customers, and will form a body of well-brought-up inhabitants, who will tend to improve and develop the neighbourhood. Camberwell Union, which has five hundred children to provide for, has already applied for permission to carry out a similar plan; and if the smaller schemes are successful, there is no reason to suppose that the Local Government Board will refuse a more extended trial.

The difficulty of obtaining adequate and trustworthy supervision for these homes is sufficiently obvious. It is, however, one which exists in every system which has to do with helpless little ones. Incidentally, it is likely to lead to the more frequent employment of women of education and high principle, to whom it affords a prospect of new and interesting work. A good many of the little State charges are drafted off to certified homes, the guardians paying a small weekly sum for their maintenance. There are cripple homes, blind homes, homes for the deaf and dumb, Roman Catholic homes, and training homes for both boys and girls. Children who fail in service, and who come back upon the guardians' hands, are often sent to these, till they can make a fresh start. The certificate for these was first obtained in 1862, by Mrs. Lewis Way, who started a small one and exerted herself to get it and others like it vouched for by the Local Government Board, so that guardians have a guarantee that the children they send will be under proper supervision. There are 211 of these small homes, for the most part admirably managed. The children are bright and healthy, and show no trace of the sullen pauper expression. The

guardians pay about four shillings a week for each child, and they are all supervised by the voluntary care of ladies deeply interested in the work. To one, at least, a little farm is attached; the cows, pigs, and poultry are looked after with the assistance of the little inmates, and it has long ceased to cost its founder anything.

Emigration is one of the best outlets for our little paupers, but, also, one which needs the greatest precautions. A great many respectable farmers in our colonies are, it is stated, willing to adopt children when, as often happens, they having married young, their own children have grown up and left the house. Such openings, carefully chosen, are ideal for those left without friends; and as the law does not allow of their being transported above the age of twelve, they reach a new country while still young enough to grow up as citizens. But here it is almost impossible to obtain adequate assurance of the character of the homes on any large scale.

As boys grow up they are apprenticed to coal-miners, bakers, and other trades. The Manchester guardians have very stringent rules for the supervision of boys employed in coal-mines. They must be visited twice a year, must attend divine service, Sunday school, and all cases of serious illness must be notified. The Metropolitan Association for Befriending Young Servants looks after workhouse girls sent to service in a sufficiently adequate manner. The ladies composing it often take an infinity of trouble with their young *protégées*, paying them visits and befriending them through years of sometimes very unsatisfactory service.

Boarding out is the form of dealing with our destitute young ones, which at its best has received the most unanimous approval. Both Ireland and Scotland are in advance of England here, Scotland having succeeded in boarding out 84 per cent. of its chargeable children with the most gratifying results.

It is to Mrs. Archer, wife of an *ex officio* guardian of Leominster, and to Mr. Armitstead, of Sandbach, that the present success of boarding out in England may be in the first instance ascribed. Unknown to one another, these two persons had, about 1861, been making the same experiment; choosing good homes in the country villages lying around them, and placing the destitute children with foster parents, the guardians being induced to try the experiment of paying a small sum for their maintenance. The success of their efforts led other unions to

try the plan. It was found that the children very quickly improved in health. Scrofula, skin-diseases, and ophthalmia disappeared before good country air and food. 'I am convinced,' wrote one member of the committee, 'that it is the miserable gruel, the ill-cooked food, and the long fasts, that fill these wretched children with disease.'

Other advantages of the boarding-out system are easily noted. The child becomes an inmate of a home, suited to its condition in life. It is provided at the outset with the best obtainable substitute for family ties. It adopts all the friends and connections of its foster-parent or parents. It goes to the public school, plays in the green fields and lanes; is loved, punished, and rewarded according to its deserts, and forgets that it has any special hold upon the Poor Law. Home life supplies its unconscious training. The boy drives the cows to pasture, feeds the pig, weeds the garden; the girl 'helps mother.' They take part in 'moves' and washing day, family feasts, mourning, and all the changes and chances of human life; the makeshifts, the hopes, the surprises, combine to mould and influence the young life. When started in life (for which start they have as good a chance as any other village child), they have a home to come back to, and the warmest relations habitually exist in after-life between foster-parents and their adopted children. They come 'home' to spend their holidays, or to be married; they are taken in in times of sickness; and it has been found that they are glad and ready, in their turn, to help those to whom they owe a debt of gratitude.

The guardians appoint a certified local committee, with the members of which rest the choice of the homes; they visit and report upon the children at short intervals, and are under the superintendence of a lady Government Inspector. With 5000 children to supervise, it is evident that the Inspector's visits must be few and far between, and that the efficacy of the scheme depends upon the local committees, who can visit the cottages constantly without the fuss and mischief likely to arise from over inspection. Cases of negligent or easily deceived committees have arisen, but on the whole much conscientious work has been done.

At present, however, England only boards out five per cent. of her parish children. In one county in England alone there were reckoned to be 48,000 homes, and it does not seem too sanguine to hope that by degrees the number thus disposed of might be doubled and trebled.

Poor-Law Guardians have still to deal with children partly supported by their parents, and who enter the workhouses with them. Their number far exceeds those in the entire charge of the State, and in 1896 amounted to 182,000. A considerable proportion of these belong to that fluctuating class known as 'ins-and-outs.' They often come in for too short a time to enable them to profit by the schools. By the present management, which certainly leaves something to be desired, a child has to remain from a fortnight to three weeks in the workhouse before it can be passed into the school, and it constantly happens that it is taken out again by its parents just as the time expires, and brought in again in a few months or weeks, to undergo another term of fruitless probation. The parents may belong to the respectable poor, and be temporarily out of work; the breadwinner may have been disabled, or be undergoing a term of imprisonment—too often the parents are drunkards and professional beggars, who come in to tide over the slack season. It is also very common for them to disappear, leaving their children chargeable on the union, and to return to claim them again as soon as they begin to have any value as wage-earners. The advisability of taking a child from an unworthy parent is very questionable. It is a hazardous matter to free the undeserving from the burden imposed upon them by nature; and though the cost of maintenance might be reclaimed by law, it is very difficult to keep the poor in sight when a legal payment has to be enforced; at the same time the future of the child is of paramount importance, and some amendment of the law in this direction seems called for.

In considering the cost of the respective systems, we find that the keep of children in unions and district schools has been reckoned at from 6*s.* 3*d.* to 10*s.* 6*d.* a week; certified homes from 4*s.*, but for special cases they run as high as 12*s.* 6*d.*; 7*s.* 6*d.* a week seems an ordinary allowance per head in cottage homes. Boarding out 4*s.* to 4*s.* 6*d.* This last, therefore, while in many respects the best, is also far the cheapest.

In France and Germany boarding out flourishes, and in our colonies it is looked upon as the best method for absorbing the destitute element, and as constituting a distinct check on the supply of pauperism in the future. The supply of homes hitherto has been in excess of the demand, and many counties have been left almost untouched. The big schools are every year looked upon with more disfavour, and there is an increasing

desire to try alternative experiments. Most of these have now passed the trial stage, and the time has come for correcting them in detail; and here, above all, the care and thought of women is of unmeasured utility. We are told that a central organisation is needed for dealing with the children of the metropolis, or at least it is urged that the Local Government Board should create a special department with this object. Colonial Governments, with their comparatively few cases, have found this to be a necessity. We confide our vast numbers to Boards which have already an overwhelming amount of miscellaneous work, and they are overlooked by a Central Board so overloaded with business, that months and years sometimes elapse before any appeal on the children's behalf can receive attention.

Some women guardians regard this proposal as tantamount to a vote of want of confidence, and are indignant at the idea of removing the children from the care of the workhouse officials. Its upholders maintain that it would serve to concentrate the special aptitude and knowledge for the work which has been shown by such members of the Board as Miss Davenport-Hill and Miss Baker, whose influence on the conduct of industrial schools will be long remembered.

Although the number of good guardians has increased of late years, it is hardly too much to say that there is still a majority who do not care for the welfare of the children, and who look upon this management as secondary to the ordinary administrative work of the unions. The members of a Board entirely elected in these interests would get a chance of making that experience felt, which perhaps only women possess in dealing with children. They would be able to obtain a hearing for reforms which sometimes, apparently insignificant, may be of such vast meaning in little lives, and the training of those who are among the men and women of the future would take its rightful place as second in importance to no other task.

EVELYN MARCH-PHILLIPPS.

GOLDEN BARROWS.

BY FRANCES E. CROMPTON.

It was only ragwort, one of the coarsest and commonest of wayside weeds; but of the glory of a sheet of ragwort in July one might write an exquisite poem. The long, low, distinctive hillocks, of which it had chosen to be the pride and crown, lay between the bare fields and the stony shore, from far back into dim days of forgotten history, known for a Danish burial-place after a fierce battle, of which all other records had been lost.

And whether the name had had its origin in a misty tradition of treasure buried in haste with the dead, or whether it were only because the yellow ragwort rioted so superbly over the spot, was left to the imagination; it was likely to be a question without an answer, for it signified very little. The place always had been, and always would be, Golden Barrows.

That the hillocks *were* barrows, and not sand-hills, had never been disputed. There was the tradition of the battle, and there were the barrows, and what more need one have? Sometimes, too, the ragwort would flower, streaked with rich brown, and this was known for a sure sign that it had sprung from the blood of the Danes beneath. And, in further and complete confirmation, was not the bare pasture behind the barrows called the Field of Battle, even to this day?

There was a straggling sandy lane that ran down from the high-road to the shore, and in this lane stood the tiny cottage-farm of Golden Barrows. It was the very brightest spot to be imagined. All the summer through it absolutely glowed with light; it was more than a feast of colour—it was too bold; one would rather call it a revel. The cottage, originally built of unhewn stones from the shore, rough with plaster, and dazzling with whitewash; the roof, so red with tiles, and so orange with lichen; the garden, brilliant to overflowing with flowers; the glaring, bleached little lane; and the sea a vivid purple blue in

a sweep on this side and behind. And before it there was nothing but the glowing sheet of ragwort on the Field of Battle and the Golden Barrows.

'Crude, terribly crude,' said the artist, who used to come to stay at the Vicarage. 'Not that there isn't something very fascinating about it. Only it wants a man in a thousand to paint it. It's beyond me.'

'It is not any painter who could do it without losing his head, you mean?' said the Vicar, himself no mean judge of art, as he leaned on the field gate, from which they stood to look over the barrows. 'Quite so. I think with you. But I know a man, a young one, who may do it, and I know another man, an old one, who could have done it; at least, I believe so, if he had ever had the chance.'

'How so?'

'An artist born,' said the vicar, thoughtfully; 'but never taught. Besides——'

'How did you come to know it?'

'The artistic faculty was there in remarkable force. You could not come into contact with him without finding it out. I used to delight in a talk with him. I tell you, it was a revelation of what could lie beneath the surface of an unusually silent nature. But he was shy. You had to find him out. And, of course, he had never had much education, and no opportunities.'

'Did he ever do anything at all?'

'Of course not! Didn't I say——? Perhaps not; well, he was blind.'

'*Blind?* How cruel!'

'Well, no,' said the vicar, slowly. 'I should not be inclined to say so. I used to think it when first I knew him, but with other years one sees things in other lights.'

'But such a mind as you speak of—literally thrown away and lost?'

'I never said thrown away or lost,' said the vicar, deliberately. 'As a matter of fact, I don't believe it has been. I say, "as a matter of fact" advisedly, for my own conviction is strong on the point. Not lost, for a moment. I only said, undeveloped. And, no doubt——'

The vicar paused, and looked thoughtfully across the Field of Battle, and the younger man too was silent, for there was a world of possibilities in that 'no doubt.'

'But who was he?' asked the artist, presently.

'Oh, didn't I mention it?' said the vicar, waking from a reverie. 'Why, it was old Arnoldson (for no one ever called him anything else), who lived at that very cottage by the Golden Barrows.'

* * * * * *

The Arnoldsons had always been a somewhat peculiar family, a family who kept very much to themselves, and had a way of breaking out, perhaps once in a generation, into some quite unexpected and unaccountable success. They were rather proud, in a silent and self-contained way, of their race, counting back, as they could, in a direct line to some heroic Arnulf Arnulfsen, who had fought in the shadowy combat, whose echoes still clung about the spot. Their little farm of Golden Barrows had been handed down from father to son, never much added to, for the Arnoldsons were not an acquiring race, but never permitted to pass out of their constant hands.

There had been in this generation, of which the vicar spoke, three brothers, of whom the youngest had been the successful one. The second had died, and left one son, adopted by the uncle who had prospered in London. The eldest, the Arnold Arnoldson, who should have carried on the direct line of family upon the old place, had never been married, and never journeyed more than a couple of miles in his life from Golden Barrows.

It was in reality the fact that the eldest brother had always been sacrificed for the two younger. Of a shy and self-contained nature, his abilities, though of an infinitely more delicate and artistic cast, did not display themselves as with the other boys, who soon outstripped him and went out into the world. For, after all, as they argued, Arnold was blind, born blind, and could make no use of advantages. He fell quietly back into the humbler place without complaint, nay, even with so little shade of discontent, that it could never be told that he observed the difference himself.

It was thought an ample recompense when the old parents left Golden Barrows to him unreservedly, without any share for the two who needed none. And he himself thought so also, for the dearest thing in all the world to him was this little spot of Golden Barrows, so long mused upon and idealised with the eyes of the blind, that to him it was a Paradise on earth. And so he passed to middle age, and then he was an old man—old Arnoldson, as every one called him—a silent, self-respecting, somewhat peculiar old man, never unfriendly, but too reserved to

make friends for himself; courteous and almost painfully grateful to the two or three poorer neighbours who did for him such little services as his slender means permitted him to spare himself; but lighting up into another being, with a pathetic unconsciousness, in intercourse with superior education, as when the vicar would come to read or talk with him.

There were few things in his life that had given him greater pleasure than when the son of the dead brother, an Arnold Arnoldson again—of ten, while he was sixty—was sent, after an illness in the spring, by the uncle in London, to spend the summer at Golden Barrows. There was a most singular bond between the two from the first moment of meeting, though in this life old Arnoldson would never see the boy. The vicar, indeed, pleased himself by tracing a strong resemblance between the two. There was the same good, intellectual forehead; the same deep-set, striking eyes (only what had become in the old man a dreamy inward gaze, was in the boy a peculiar, grave, pondering fixity of expression, as if he looked at an object to *learn* it); the same habit of silence; the same individual-looking hands. And if genius *be* an infinite capacity for taking pains, it was there in both, only that it had found no other outlet in the old man save in the inexhaustible patience that kept him always scrupulous in person, always refined in house and garden (and at what cost of effort to himself, who but the blind can tell?), while in the boy it was peeping forth at times in that indomitable will to *do* and ever do *better*.

They were not at all demonstrative companions; half an hour would pass at once without exchange of a word; but they must be together, the boy curled up in the sunshine, hungrily devouring the few books of the cottage, or what the vicar would lend; while old Arnoldson would stroll about his garden, tending his plants by instinct rather than by any perceptible sense. Or they would seat themselves on a favourite spot on the Golden Barrows, and the boy would describe the scene to the old man—a proceeding never forgotten, and to which the boy afterwards attributed his grand power of seizing upon and literally dwelling within his pictures. And then they would fall into silence, and the boy would lie and dream, and the old man would sit, and—and what? At that age it is easier to look backward than forward, and there was one vision of past days that old Arnoldson often, often beheld again. There was a boy in those days whom he seemed to see in that curious detached sort of way with which

one does look back on one's younger self, as if it were on some one else—a boy full of a shy and delicate enthusiasm, a boy whose every thought was the thought of an artist, a boy breathed upon by the subtle spirit of poetry; and yet a boy silent, self-repressed, relegated to the background (perhaps this, too, of his own doing), weighed down by the ever-present recollection of his blindness, and, he supposed, as a natural consequence, of his incapacity and inferiority. It was not a natural consequence, if he had ever told his dreams and longings; his parents were just people, and willing to make an effort for three children as well as for two, and with education and development, although the glorious visions of form and colour which were half life to the boy must be in realisation for ever denied to his blindness, yet it was an impossibility that this beautiful nature would not have found expansion for the poetry born in it.

There had once been a chance, the one chance that comes to all men, and the only one he had ever had. A small sum of money left by a distant relative had enabled his father to offer the boy some advantages, as a mere matter of justice, not because it was ever even suspected that he craved for them. But the boy knew that his brothers expected a refusal, nay, were eagerly anticipating it—was he not blind? And this was the vision that old Arnoldson so often, often saw; of the lonely boy making his way to a lonely spot in the Golden Barrows, his favourite haunt from babyhood, and there, lying on his face, struggling on another Field of Battle. To his artist fancy it appeared to him as if shadowy warriors swept round and round in the field beneath him; he seemed to see their misty forms enwreathed in combat, almost he heard the faint, far-off clashing of the weapons in that battle of dreams. And as he followed the fight, he had a vision of shining soldiers victorious, of dark shapes yielding, a vision such as he told to no mortal. There were moments of exquisite thought vouchsafed for his comfort; after all, there were times when that imprisoned spirit received its recompenses.

And then upon that gentle soul, that waited still upon God, there fell a rapture of renunciation. He rose from the ground he sat up among the golden sheet of flowers, he folded his hands, and stayed until his heart grew strong. And the din of battle died away, and the fierce forms vanished, and there was only the peace of the Golden Barrows enfolding him, and the sunshine upon them as if it had been the smile of God.

He had one curious saying afterwards that no one about him understood.

'Golden Barrows, indeed. I know it. I found all my treasure there.'

* * * * * *

'And what is it like to-day? Tell me just how it is, even if it is only the same. I never get tired of it.'

'It never is quite the same, uncle,' replied Arnold, as the pair sat together in their favourite nook on the barrows. 'The ragwort is out everywhere now. It is a quiet evening; there is no crimson like yesterday evening. The sky is very blue. It begins to be greeny-blue in the east, but the west is all full of light yet. It is so much lighter than any of my paints. I wonder how I should——? There are no clouds, only the blue of the sky. The sea is the same, but deeper; it is all still, so still that it seems to only flow altogether, not to wash in waves. There is a sea-gull over it, white and grey. The gold of the ragwort all over the barrows, comes against the blue of the sea; the shore does not show from where we are sitting, you know. It looks the goldenest, goldenest thing on the earth against the sea there. I wonder if there could be anything goldener in Heaven?'

The boy's voice died away into one of his fits of musing. Presently he said, 'Uncle, this is just where I would paint the picture of the barrows that we have talked about, just here. The barrows fall into beautiful soft shapes on each side, and there is a hollow part in the middle where the sea shows through.'

'Ay, lad, is this the place?'

The old man raised his head, and tried to see it with his mind, thinking of that picture that he trusted should be painted one day, that picture of the blue sky, and deeper sea, and foreground of yellow ragwort, that should be called 'Golden Barrows,' and should be signed with the sturdy old name Arnold Arnoldson.

'I would have done it,' said old Arnoldson, lingeringly.

'I will do it,' said young Arnoldson, with mighty resolution.

'Ay, lad, do it. I shan't need to grieve that all my thoughts and fancies of art and poetry, that I lived on when I was a boy, have all come to naught, if I can feel that you'll take them up, and carry them on. Nay, I don't grieve in one way; the

Almighty does as He will with His own, and it is a lifetime's pleasure He has granted me out of them, only I seem to have so little to show for it. Well, it *is* well. I think you'll make a man, Arnold; I seem to feel you will. The vicar says it too. I haven't much to leave you but a blessing, but that's yours. Your uncle will look after your education; and you will have Golden Barrows. And, my lad,' said old Arnoldson, with a kind of humble pleading, 'I think with the wandering about, and thinking, and thinking, Golden Barrows has crept into your heart as years ago it did into mine, but I can't look that it should be as much to you as it is to me. But I would ask you, if you find it anyway possible, not to part with it, but to keep it for the sake of what it has been to all us who have gone before.'

'I'd do it for *you*. But I love it. And I'll *never* part with it,' said the boy, in short queer sentences, with his face laid on his knees.

'Ay, a golden, golden spot it has been to me,' said old Arnoldson, turning his face slowly about as if to take in a long look of the barrows glowing in the sunset. 'God knows the treasure I have found in it.'

What there was in his manner to vaguely alarm the boy he could not have said, but there was something that for a moment awed him.

'Uncle,' he said presently, 'I think we ought to be going in. It is getting colder for you.'

'Yes, yes, perhaps so,' said old Arnoldson, rising to his feet. 'You're quite right, my boy. I feel a little chilly.'

And 'a little chilly' he remained all evening, and after he had gone to bed, where he lay awake, 'just a little chilly.'

It was not till the grey of the morning that he permitted himself to waken the boy. The first call did not rouse him, sleeping as he did the hearty sleep of early boyhood.

'I can make shift to wait a while longer,' said old Arnoldson, and turned his sightless face towards the window.

As the light between the curtains broadened, he called again, and again.

'Uncle!' said the boy, starting up in his bed.

'I am not feeling very well this morning, Arnold,' said old Arnoldson, quite clearly, but with haltings between the words. 'I want you to go and ask Betty Beers to come to the kitchen fire earlier than usual.'

'But let me get you something warm first, uncle,' said the boy, dressing rapidly in a confused kind of way.

'No, I'm not needing anything, I thank you, my dear. Only to go and tell Betty Beers.'

'Tell her what? Oh, uncle, tell her that you are ill?' cried Arnold, in distress.

'Well, it might be so,' said old Arnoldson, reluctantly. 'But it will be all right. Go and bid her come; and, after that—perhaps, after that—go on to the village, and ask the doctor to look in this morning.'

'But that will take so long. I'll come back with Betty, and then go.'

'No, Arnold; you do just as I say. It will be best, my lad; I shan't be alone long—bless you!'

And, at the time, Arnold thought they were only caressing words, and it was not till afterwards that he remembered how they had been dwelt upon.

So he went.

'I'll be dead before he comes back,' said old Arnoldson, aloud to himself, and quite composedly. 'I'm hoping I will be. I always meant to save him that, if it should come soon. Now there's another blessed thing—it's waited till morning before calling me, so I could send him out. And I always said, let it be at morning, when the light came, and the tide was full.'

And old Arnoldson put his hands together—his feeble, cold hands—and murmured, with halts between them, the words—

'O Lord, it's an old man's last prayer—an old man who's lived threescore years, and never known Thee fail him. O Lord, remember him in mercy—and forgive; and, if it mightn't be too much for a poor man to ask,—when I go, O Lord, let my eyes be opened—and, oh, let me see Golden Barrows then!'

Let us believe, when he should behold it, to be satisfied. For if, as we trust, our dim eyes are enlightened by death, then surely we shall discern the places of the earth as God discerns them. This fair dwelling fair no longer, because corroded from within; this battlefield, a triumph no more, but a shameful witness to an unjust cause; and again, this mean room a palace of beauty, this hospital bed a couch tended by angels. Then, surely, should old Arnoldson see his Golden Barrows, golden in very truth, radiant with the halo of the life lived beside them—a long life made up of patience, of humility, of self-abnegation.

And the sun rose gloriously above Golden Barrows, and touched them into living splendour, and the head on the pillow turned with a last effort towards the window over the beloved place; and with that, the full-flowing tide upon the shore began to turn, all peacefully as a tide in dream, and all as peacefully the soul of Arnold Arnoldson passed out with the tide.

SIR CHARLES GRANDISON.

ALONG the ill-paved streets of London, well-nigh a century and a half ago, my lady's woman scurries. John Footman can scarce accommodate his pace to hers, especially as she turns into the square, where my lady has her town mansion. The knockers rat-tat under Mrs. Betty's hand; she bustles through the hall filled with Indian or Japan china, up the first flight of stairs, past the withdrawing-rooms, up the second, and bursts into a room, by the lap-dog, the mirrors, the patches, trinkets, washes, on the *toilette*, my lady's own. 'Oh, lud, my lady! the world at the library! the Duchess's woman agog for it! she did not get her hands on it, I promise your la'ship. But, my lady, Sir Charles is undone, nearhand married to a foreigner, a woman of quality!' Mrs. Betty's voice quavers, the mistress snatches the thumbed volume from her, the business of powder and full dress forgotten, for my lady is a woman of sensibility, and *the book is 'Sir Charles Grandison.'*

To Samuel Richardson belongs the honour of breaking ground as the first great English *moral* novelist, whose histories, free from the coarseness till his time incidental to wit, although dealing with delicate subjects, yet handle those subjects in a manner appreciative of the task's difficulties. Tedium of elaboration, plots sensational rather than coherent, and 'elemental emotion,' but tend to prove that the laws of fiction, traditions to a later century, were practically experiments to him. His genius 'flowered late;' not till he was fifty did the world receive 'Pamela,' followed by 'Clarissa' and 'Sir Charles Grandison.'

When, in business intervals, bookseller Richardson sat himself down in his shop parlour to pen the history of a '*good*, fine gentleman,' people of letters shook their heads over the anomaly of the task. Already the simple, stout old man—whose appearance was so disappointing to romantic Miss Theo watching for an embodied Sir Charles in Mrs. Brown's tea-shop—had shown

his unrivalled insight into feminine character, but virtue in a masculine habit was monstrous, unnatural! Yet a proof to the contrary lies in the seven volumes of 'Sir Charles,' antiquated now, yet as delicately wrought as our great-grandmothers' samplers.

Horace Walpole's distaste to 'mighty good young men' has induced a verdict of priggishness against the model hero. But even to-day, when chivalry is too often a byword, Sir Charles, rendered by his time long-winded and stilted, yet by his courage, courtesy, Christianity, stands out a *hall-marked* gentleman.

He is in many instances an anachronism, his conversation is not garnished with fashionable expletives, his ideas on brain-sick or frail humans foreshadow the modern; even animals with him have rights. The story depends, in Dr. Johnson's opinion, on its 'sentiment,' the fineness of its character-drawing, needful in the days when a novel lasted a lifetime, flavours the insipidity of the epistolary style, and the natural dialogues bestow sprightliness on the whole. As for the heroine, no sweeter than Harriet Byron ever sipped bohea; her affectations are but those of her century, sense and spirit relieve her sensibility.

The history, told in a series of letters, principally exchanged, Richardson announces, between 'young ladies of polite education and fine spirits,' opens with a jaunt to London, taken by Miss Byron. Great has been the dolour of the Northamptonshire *beaux* over the 'toast's' departure. Mr. Orme stands disconsolate on the highway as the coach hunts past; Mr. Fenwick prepares a genteel bait at the first halting-place; Mr. Greville, droll man, threatens pursuit to town!

Daily and nightly must the post have ridden it between the London house in Grosvenor Street, and Ashby Cannons, Northamptonshire. Cousin Lucy Selby, scribbling in the cedar parlour, has full time to make up her packet, but 'Visitors for Miss Byron!' 'The gaming master for Miss Byron!' 'Inspection of new footman, for Miss Byron!' break in on the filling of the sheets, Harriet, nevertheless, despatches with such huge regularity, that one marvels how she found time to experience her adventures, when the mere narrative ran to such lengths.

Within the week, Harriet's town sojourn has added two '*fellows*' to her suitors' catalogue: Mr. Fowler, for whom the old uncle Sir Rowland Meredith doughtily goes a-courting; and Sir Hargrave Pollexfen, 'shot through,' perchance, as the

Spectator hath it, 'by an arrow from a dimple;' but Miss Byron is not smit. Sir Hargrave's courtship grows stormy. 'The wisest, wittiest, most modest of charmers *must* be his!' In vain tarries she in her closet, pleads 'her fancy is not hit,' sinks in the most chilling curtsies.

Lucy unwafers the packets with ever-succeeding impatience; the air of the great world breathes from them. Harriet is like to be a 'racketer.' 'The primrose of Mr. Fowler's heart' is not for him; but Harriet, who throughout evinces a turn for adopting relatives, has consolations. She will be his sister, Sir Rowland her father. 'Would to God,' sighs the involuntary parent, 'you would be a farther remove; let it be *niece!*'

Lucy skips the histories of Sir Hargrave and Mr. Greville, that she may study the figure Harriet will cut at the masquerade whither cousin Reeves will carry her. Vastly modish the 'Arcadian princess' will be, in blue satin waistcoat, and petticoat aglitter with silver fringe and spangles, her hair 'complimented with an appearance' curling under the white net cap, an Indian fan substituted for the crook, Harriet fears, 'might give an air of confidence.' Her mind is the more at ease that the whimsical Greville will retire, though his farewell is not exactly soothing: 'Remember, madam, you are watched. The moment you find the man you can favour, up comes your Greville, cuts a throat, and flies his country!'

Horrors and confusion! Distraction to the houses of Selby and Reeves! Miss Byron is vanished, whipt off at the Haymarket masquerade!

Each hour has its budget, for Mr. Reeves's mental agonies by no means preclude the pleasures of composition. The dear creature's chairmen were tampered with, fuddled; the new footman is a specious impostor. Greville is the miscreant; but no! she is tracked to the fields and muddy byways of Paddington; she is, *à la mort!* in the power of the wicked 'Sir Hargrave.' Next, the 'villain and the angel' are separated; Miss Byron lies—in fits—in Lord L——'s house near Colnebrooke; and, with a clash of rapiers, Sir Charles Grandison takes the stage!

It is comprehensible that ever after, the word *masquerade* suffices to pale Harriet's complexion. Vividly she describes her terrors, when, withdrawing the chair-curtains, a waste of country meets her eyes, her screams pierce the night air till one of the opportune swoons of eighteenth-century heroines silences her. 'The barbarous Sir Hargrave' is on hand at her awakening

in the house of the Paddington widow. A midnight marriage shall be the obdurate Miss Byron's portion, already the Fleet parson opens his dog-eared Prayer-book.

With the sex's artillery of sobs, struggles, swoons, Harriet defends herself, dashes the book even from dirty, clerical hands. Sir Hargrave vacillates; the parson is dismissed as Harriet lies bruised, senseless in her elbow-chair; but her recovery is hailed with taunts; her screams imitated 'with the bleating of a sheep.' Away with her to the house in the forest! Muffled in the red capuchin, bound and gagged, Miss Byron is forced into a chariot. Away lashes the coachman!

Suddenly the chariot stops on a dispute of way, muffled shrieks are heard from within. The gentleman posting to town in the grey dawning scents a female in distress, a glib tale is recited by Sir Hargrave, interrupted by Harriet's shrieks. Swords clash, Sir Hargrave is flung under the chariot-wheel. Dishevelled, affrighted, Miss Byron falls into the arms of Sir Charles Grandison, is by him carried to his sisters, and spends the rest of the week in convulsions!

Mrs. Mary Delany in her versatile *Memoirs*, cheating her shellwork to devour the new novel, is of opinion that 'from the rescue, the story rises.' Harriet and her readers are introduced to a full cast of new friends: Miss Grandison, diverting whimsical creature; Lord and Lady L——; the precocious Emily—Sir Charles's ward—'a lovely girl, somewhat pitted with the small-pox,' Harriet in naïve jealousy describes her; Dr. Bartlett, portrayed perhaps from the divine Richardson sat under at St. Clement Danes.

To Miss Byron, on a day's acquaintance, Sir Charles, now 'a brother,' presents his sister Charlotte to his 'sister Harriet,' a presentation so affecting to the latter as to require the administration of 'some drops on sugar.' Her volant, self-conducted quill acquaints her family with her *brother's* characteristics; though 'half is left unsaid' of this 'extraordinary man,' already the family, despite Miss Byron's blushes, view him as the lover prospective.

Apprehensions of Sir Hargrave's malice disquieting her, the Selbys devour the letter describing Sir Charles, self-invited, at the breakfast of his challenger. 'Pistols for two, coffee for one!' was the expected order of things; but what a plague! Sir Charles will not draw! Laws of so-called honour are naught to him, he owns no law but God's and his country's; yet, provoked

by a Venetian noble, he owns smilingly to the sullen Pollexfen and his boon fellows, he has availed himself of 'his natural weapons,' aids cogent enough to enforce on the aggressor 'a fortnight's lying-by.'

The humorous Miss Grandison, meanwhile, pops about her 'younger sister.' 'Nay, she will be hanged (her word) if she has not found her out!' Sir Charles, somewhat prematurely sounded, answers, 'Every one must love Miss Byron,' but drops the alarming hint, 'Matrimony at present is not in his power.' 'Lord, bless me, ladies,' cries Harriet, 'the best thing I can do is to borrow a chariot and six and drive away to Northamptonshire.'

Matrimony, however, is life's *summum bonum* to Sir Charles—for his acquaintance: uncle, friends, dependents, are paired by him; only his Charlotte cries, 'No dangling fellow for her!' Lord G—— Richardson has but an initial acquaintance with the peerage—'honest man is, is not, is——' the lively lady 'professes she cannot tell what!' A conference between Harriet and Sir Charles on this head is held in the library, insensibly the conversation changes from the sister's to the *brother's* concerns. 'The trembling simpleton is forced to grasp the arm of her chair,' as Sir Charles, his 'fine black eyes bent on the loveliest face in the world,' relates his connections with the noble Porretta family, tells how the adorable devout Clementina's passion for the heretic Englishman has engendered a melancholy. Miss Byron's 'little tremblings' increase as Sir Charles mentions his refusal to renounce religion and country for the beautiful heiress, details that offered compromise, which, leaving prospective daughters to be bred up Papists is, Mrs. Delany's criticism considers, the only blot in his actions.

'His noble heart' (writes Harriet) 'was too much affected to answer questions.' He but announces his presence is urgently requested in Bologna, to the unhappy Clementina. 'Unhappy Clementina, and not happy Sir Charles Grandison. And' (Lucy reads) 'who is happy? *Not*, I am sure, *your* Harriet Byron.'

To interest focussed on hero and heroine, the Italian episode appears a superfluous concession to the Renaissance taste of the day. Richardson's continental ideas savour of the library, each bush has its assassin, priests patronise the keyhole for auditory purposes, passions are conventionally unbridled. The worthy bookseller's Italy is as simulated and unreal as the Ruins of Palmyra closing the Vauxhall vistas.

Before her brother's journey, Miss Grandison complains she is 'to be choked by the matrimonial noose!' Lord G—— does not play Petrucio to her Shrew; he is heartily enamoured of the black-eyed minx, who even orders him from her side in the wedding coach. Sir Charles is, however, diverted from the study of his hazardous experiment by the inopportune advent of one of the 'half-score' women who sigh to call him *servant.* Lady Olivia, a lady of Florence, possessing her country's attributes of dark eyes and a reprehensible poniard, arrives in England, to visit the recalcitrant Englishman. Sir Charles is sure fatal to the sex!

Notwithstanding the persuasive poniard, Sir Charles hastens abroad. Lucy shakes the lavender from the linen of her Harriet's couch, for the dear girl will have no more of town diversions, she will wait upon her relatives next Friday. Sir Charles, posting through France, may think upon Miss Byron once more in her still room, her notable hands busied with 'salves, sere-cloths, confects, cordials, persico;' but her heart—far enough away. Still the post-boy's horn sounds along the Northampton highway; Lady G——'s budgets, *Italian* letters for Miss Byron. But droll reports of Charlotte's matrimonial squabbles make Harriet smile but faintly; visits find her, despite assumed cheerfulness, 'visibly fallen away!'

If, indeed, 'only actuated by compassion' for Clementina, Sir Charles seems provokingly complaisant, nought but the lady's religious scruples prevent the nuptials. Yet even Sir Charles might recognise a dilemma, if, in saving his Clementina in Italy, in England, 'his dearest Harriet's "love-sick heart"' should tremble into a decline!

For, as autumn crimsons the leaves in the Selby orchard, their hectic flush is rivalled by Miss Byron's cheek. 'Cheerful, serene, resigned' she is, but five months' suspense have worn on her. A summons to breakfast with her grandmother is obeyed; but languidly does she listen to madam's account (the old lady in train for apparitions by exhilarating readings in *Sherlock on Death*) of the *ghost* who waited on her yesterday. When the truth flashes on Harriet, she, clinging to Lucy, must withdraw from the low-ceiled parlour for very gladness. Sir Charles is still a-courting, but in England; *the wife he desires is Harriet Byron.*

Very pretty is the courtship of Harriet's sweet confusion by Sir Charles's gallant familiarity. Greville, indeed, expresses a

resolve to run the successful wooer through the body; but coming in contact with Sir Charles's *natural weapons*, finds them convincing, and offers him his 'pew in church.' His magnanimity indeed is admirable, his farewell quotation being both laudatory and poetical—

> 'Happy, happy, happy pair!
> None but the brave deserves the fair!'

A distracting publicity attends the wooing, for the 'marriage of Miss Byron must be no *hugger-mugger* doing!' Down come Lady G—— and Emily (Harriet's *sister* by this time), cousins, friends, half the shire. At last, *the day* arrives. Hartshorn, salts, are requisitioned for the 'angel' Harriet. The procession (detailed in somewhat the fashion of a state funeral!) is formed, the coachway lined with spectators; Miss Byron is Miss Byron no longer!

From the wedding, the novel insensibly takes the appearance of a sequel, heightened by the excess of poetic justice, noticeable in eighteenth-century romances—

> 'Where suffering virtue ever finds relief,
> And black-browed ruffians always come to grief!'

In the 'house in the forest' Sir Hargrave expires in lingering agonies, his dying breath crying on Sir Charles's forgiveness; in Italy Clementina's persecuting cousin seeks 'a nameless death.' Clementina herself, with a train of six relatives, lover, confessor, and female friend, ventures to England to be embraced as *sister* by Harriet, Lady Grandison; clasped also with the latter and Lady L——, by the fraternally-minded Sir Charles. Lady G——'s humours soften under maternal ecstasies over 'her pug,' the baby Harriet! 'It has run away with her roguery.'

Fondly Richardson lingers on his 'happy pair,' mutually happy in each other. Harriet, in the Lady's drawing-room, starts from her green velvet settee at her 'dear man's' step, to wander with him 'among the sombre yews' and 'dusky treillages' of the gardens of Grandison Hall. Looking on his 'dearest life,' Sir Charles hums a stave of his nuptial verse—

> 'Where charms of mind and persons meet,
> How rich our raptures rise.
> The fair that renders earth so sweet,
> Prepares me for the skies!'

K. L. MONTGOMERY.

THE ECCENTRIC LADY WINSTER:

A GEORGIAN NOVELETTE.

BY ELSA D'ESTERRE-KEELING, AUTHOR OF 'OLD MAIDS AND YOUNG,' ETC.

CHAPTER I.

ABOUT LADY WINSTER.

LADY, by discourtesy; for her title proper was mistress.

It was the humour of her eighteenth-century contemporaries to dub her Lady Winster, and as for the greater part of her life she was known by no other name, it seems best to call her by that name here. There is extant a document in which it is stated that her title of *Lady* was given to Mistress Winster 'from the very eccentric style of her dress.' Never, surely, was a patent of nobility conferred on stranger ground, and, that being said, it shall be explained that the eccentricity attaching to Lady Winster's dress lay wholly and solely in the circumstance that it was that worn in the reign of George I., and discarded in the reigns of George II. and George III.

To touch here only on the head-dress. This consisted of a large *toupée* made of horsehair, and rising to the height of half a foot, over which Lady Winster's front hair had been turned up, as the custom was, while she had had front hair. When she had ceased to have front hair, or, to speak the truth, had ceased to have hair at all, it is obvious that there was nothing to turn up over the *toupée*. Still Lady Winster wore the *toupée*, and remained above the earth and lived. That is mentioned, because there were persons, her ladyship's contemporaries, who affirmed that, affairs with them having come to such a point, they would have sunk below the earth and died. As events showed, they largely predeceased Lady Winster, who lived to be a centenarian, her life embracing the entire eighteenth century. There are persons who base her claim to attention upon that fact alone. These persons are

only to be excused as being unacquainted with a very singular affair affecting Lady Winster's private life, which affair—now for the first time made public—shall here be set forth in full.

In a life so long, Lady Winster had naturally witnessed many great events of history. Among them was the 'Forty-five.' The 'Forty-five' was a thing of yesterday to her, and the mention of Preston Pans brought light to her eyes; so did that of Culloden Moor, but the light was then a different one. It was one of this lady's many peculiarities to bring into connection with Culloden any change disapproved by her. The rise of Ranelagh, which preceded the decline of Vauxhall, was to her an outcome of Culloden. The reform of the calendar, by which England was robbed of eleven days, was traced by her to Culloden, and she saw in the introduction of vaccination a horror to be comprehended only as one of the inevitable sequelæ of Culloden. She had wondered what the world was coming to after Culloden, and when mail-coaches began to run, and coal-gas to be used for lighting, she felt that Culloden had prepared her for these shocks of surprise.

Of all these things Lady Winster would speak freely with one Mr. Smith, a grocer, living within easy distance of her home. Tradition has it that she in a manner made a friend of Mr. Smith, and that she cultivated no other intimacy. The thing is not so singular as it may at first seem. Lady Winster, though by right plain mistress only, was a person of gentle birth and of strong views on what she called 'the subject of mob.' Her singling out of Mr. Smith for friendship becomes, however, quite comprehensible when it is borne in mind that kings and queens hold uniformly the opinion that friendship being conferred by them is in itself a royal accolade, and that the person thus privileged ceases to be a commoner. It was from Mr. Smith, who was purveyor of news to her as well as purveyor of groceries, that Lady Winster learned one day that her neighbour, who, like herself, was a lone widow lady, was dying.

'Dying!' Lady Winster exclaimed, in her trepidation dropping a diminutive packet of tea just handed to her by Mr. Smith. 'So young, and dying!'

The lady in question was aged sixty years. It was from her great seniority as a centenarian that Lady Winster expressed surprise at death's overtaking her so prematurely. Not only did she express surprise at this aloud to Mr. Smith, but she expressed it aloud to herself throughout the course of her walk

home. Death had always been a very terrible thing to her imagination, and at the age of one hundred years it took to itself greater terrors than it had ever taken before. The reason of this lies on the surface. Her agitation growing instead of diminishing, Lady Winster now did a thing which she had never done before. She knocked at her neighbour's door instead of her own. It was opened by a woman in mid-life, who listened courteously to the old lady's explanation to the effect that, with the 'rapper'—so she called the door-knocker—in her hand, she had come to see her mistake, and in consternation had let it fall so loudly as to have disturbed, she feared, grievously, the sick lady within. The waiting woman signified amiably that the action had entailed no regrettable consequence, and added a request that the lady on the doorstep would enter and speak to her dying mistress, whose one remaining wish would thus be fulfilled.

Profoundly surprised, Lady Winster entered the house, and suffered herself to be led to the sick-room.

CHAPTER II.

ABOUT LADY WINSTER'S NEIGHBOUR.

IN a very few moments Lady Winster was face to face with her dying neighbour. She had seen this lady before, but she had never seen her in close proximity, and only in close proximity was she able to see persons with that clearness which marks off the individual from the genus. As seen by her in passing glimpses from a varying distance, the lady now dying had never presented to her the picture which she now presented. For the reader of this to form a conception of the beauty of that picture it will be needful for him to imagine to himself a lady of an admirable loveliness lying white-garmented in white dishevelled hair upon a white pillow, with whiteness of sheets about her and whiteness of counterpane over her. As Lady Winster stood by this beautiful person's bedside, looking at her, there came to her face a deeper greyness. The white-haired lady in the bed noticed this, and put out two white hands, and said simply—

'Dear mamma, will you be in the glout with your poor daughter still?'

This was her daughter Dorothy, whom, forty-five years before, Lady Winster had put from her heart because she was not to be dissuaded from marrying a gentleman who had fought on the Royalist side at Culloden.

The person who imagines that Lady Winster either repulsed, or took the hands held out to her, has not realised that this lady's heart-beats had timed a hundred years, and that transports of anger and transports of affection alike came to her no more. In this supreme moment she turned from her dying daughter to the waiting-woman, who had been a spectator of this scene, and said in a voice which was primarily querulous—

'I am struck with a tremulation.'

There was a chair in close nearness to her. The woman advanced, and helped her to sit down on it. She was now seated at her daughter's bed-head, and appeared to muse for some moments. Then she said, putting the question on the obvious which carries off irksome embarrassment—

'Are you, madam, indeed my daughter Dorothy?'

'Indeed am I, mamma,' was answered, earnestly.

The two hands of the dying lady now lay supinely on the counterpane. They were of the rare delicacy and whiteness of white flowers. After a little, Lady Winster's hand that was nearest to the bedside was timidly stretched out and laid on one of them, on which it fluttered like a brown leaf. That was all that was said by these two, and all that was done by them; and in the moments which immediately followed upon that, the aged ladies who were mother and daughter fell one of them into a reverie and the other into a sleep.

It was Lady Winster who fell into a reverie. In it she went over her life. Childhood passed before her and girlhood and womanhood, a period of thirty-nine years spent in eccentric spinsterhood; for that strangeness which, as evinced in her dress, had won her the name of Lady Winster in later days, had, as she herself was vaguely conscious, marked her from her girlhood. The lover's madness had never entered into this life of hers, and, as Lady Winster called to mind the one suitor for her hand, she did not idealise him. He had been a poor young gentleman who had wooed in her a rich and not young gentlewoman. With remembrance of him came remembrance of her marriage, and the birth of her one child, and with remembrance of her one child came remembrance of many and divers quarrels, the result of the child's high temper and her

unwise upbringing. Across the gulf of fifty years came Dorothy's shrill protests—

'Your gown, mamma, has been twenty years out of fashion.' 'This, mamma, is your old fal-lal taste.' 'I protest, mamma, you are tawdered out a show.' 'Your diamond stomacher, mamma, makes my papa and I laugh.'

This sauciness had continued unchidden till the girl's fifteenth year, and then Lady Winster had decided that things had come to a point with Dorothy at which it became imperatively needful to pull the check-string. This process was one resorted to in her days to bring drivers to a standstill; it did not, however, bring Dorothy to a standstill. What follows is, verbatim, the conversation which took place between her and her mother on the day upon which she surpassed herself as a revolting daughter. She was standing lost in thought at a window when Lady Winster came upon her and said, using a form of address which she used when pulling the check-string—

'Miss, you are in a brown study. What is the matter?'

To this civil question the uncivil answer was—

'Mamma, you are one or other the most inquisitive creature in the world.'

The protest which this elicited, and which ran: 'You are certainly not the best-humoured creature in the world, and not the most polite, neither,' in its turn provoked the protest—

'Lord, mamma, you're so precise and old-maidish.'

As she spoke, pretty, naughty Dorothy Winster ostentatiously waved a little hand on which a ring glittered. She wore this ring on her wedding finger.

Her mother started, then she said ironically what was in effect an expression of surprise that the ring was not the plain gold one, the donning of which takes place at the marriage altar. At the same time, she bade the girl remove the ring to her middle finger. Dorothy did so, saying the while—

'Shall I have never a ring, mamma, think you, but on my medical finger?'

Dorothy Winster was quite capable of inventing a phrase at first hearing so absurd as medical finger for middle finger, but as a matter of fact she had not invented it, but it was one common in her time.

Lady Winster started again; then she said—

''Twill be none of my fault, miss, if you do not marry. What

say you to Mr. Neild? He is a handsomish man, is he not? And certainly he is not unagreeable.'

Dorothy Winster took her stand by that 'certainly.'

'Certainly, he has a foot like a bear, and a hand like a hatchet,' she said.

Lady Winster looked very grave.

'These kind of objections,' she said, 'are the objections of a young maid who will be beaten, and compulsed to marry whom she should.'

Dorothy tossed her head. Her mother looked at her with growing disapproval, and remarked—

'You are effectually, miss, the most completely a minx of any miss that lives, but I protest you will be brought one day to knock under the table;'—Lady Winster used here in full a form now only used elliptically—'ay, we shall see what brings you on your knees.'

Dorothy stood quite still, and said, 'I will never sing small, mamma.'

'You will sing sorrow, miss,' was the answer which this met. 'To sing sorrow' was the exquisite phrase of the day for 'to fare badly.'

Dorothy continued to stand quite still. She was a young, young thing, and a great fear came upon her, followed by a great anger. In the great anger she said—

'Mamma, I hate you; and I can't abide you!' She then burst into tears, and, weeping, added, in unconscious doggerel, 'I declare it, I won't bear it!'

Her mother put her hand upon her shoulder, and said gravely—

'You seem in an uneasy [air, miss. Nay, your humming a trillo deceives me not.'

Dorothy, with a quick change of temper, began to make gay vocal music.

'I see now clearly that you affection some one, and I would gladly know who 'tis you are so mightily taken with. Perhaps 'tis Mr. Todd, to whom you spoke so much at the Ridotto?'

'Fie, mamma, what a dust you make about nothing!' Dorothy exclaimed; but she blushed, for she had, as a matter of fact, spoken very much to Mr. Todd at the Ridotto. 'I think,' she added, 'you would have me all shyness and slyness, and pretending to have no voice but to sing sol-fa to my music-mistress.'

A silence fell here, but the fact that Dorothy Winster had a voice by no means limited in its exercise to the singing of sol-fa to her music-mistress, caused the silence to be of brief duration; then she said, with a pretty but portentous change of manner—

'Dear mamma, you use not to put constraint on your Dorothy; but, indeed, I will never speak to Mr. Todd again. There is one gentleman only to whom in the world I care to speak.'

For the third time Lady Winster started. Then she said, angrily—

'You spoke once, as I think, to Captain Herriott at the Ridotto.'

'Yes, mamma; and what is the mighty matter of that?'

It would have been wiser for Dorothy to have phrased her question differently, but she was three parts made of tinder and terribly inflammable. Her mother answered, severely—

'The mighty matter of that is that I have enough of your mockado, miss.'

'That is infallible!' was the reckless answer from the girl.

In using the word 'infallible' for *certain* she used a hyper-fashionable slangism of the moment. She used it daringly, but not so daringly that she did not use it with hands upon her ears, a precautionary measure against the box on the ears which she expected, and which she received over the hands.

Again a silence set in, and the person who broke it this time was Lady Winster. She broke it with a description of Captain Herriott, as that gentleman appeared scanned by her through Stuart glasses, for the main defect in Captain Herriott, as he presented himself to her observation, lay in the circumstance that he had fought on the Royalist side at Culloden. Dorothy Winster had been as ardent a Cavalier as her mother, but she had gone over to the enemy in giving her heart to Captain Herriott. She listened with a surprising patience to her mother's unflattering picture of the Royalist soldier, and then said, with a superb *naïveté*—

'There are chapters on which we do not agree, mamma, and on Captain Herriott's chapter we disagree perfectly.'

Lady Winster did not start this time, but said quietly—

'This puts me into the midst of your plot, miss. You would marry Captain Herriott. Have a care, for I will have you marry Mr. Neild; and though you have met me with opposition often, yet here your oppositions signify not—this pinch of snuff.'

Lady Winster suited the action to the word, and for the second time Dorothy quailed; then she said, pathetically—

'Mamma, seemed there not ever but one gentleman in the world that you could marry him? Had you never such a feel, mamma? Dear mamma, will you be all unpersuadableness and resentment to your misfortunate daughter? There is only Captain Herriott in all the world that I could marry.'

This tender and pretty speech evoked from Dorothy's mother only the chilling comment—'Romanticness!'

The girl came straight down from her altitudes, and said in a dry, strained voice—

'Nay; but 'tis your romanticness, mamma, that I shall not marry Captain Herriott, because he fought with the Royalists at Culloden. I deadly hate romanticness, and I will marry Captain Herriott, because——'

Here Dorothy paused. To state the ground upon which she would marry Captain Herriott, and none other but him, would be certainly to lay herself open to the suspicion of being romantic. She said no more, but she took on the evening of this day a step which clearly came within the range of the romantic. It was a step into a carriage, in which she was wheeled away from her parents' house as quickly and as quietly as might be. After that Dorothy Winster sang sorrow till she died, so much did subsequent events show that the man against whom Lady Winster counted chiefly his fighting on the Royalist side at Culloden was a very pitiful fellow.

* * * * * *

It has taken the present writer much longer to tell all that is here told to the reader than it took Lady Winster to live through it all again in reverie. It took her not longer than fifteen minutes to do this, and at the end of the fifteen minutes that hand of hers that was a brown leaf fluttering upon the white flower of a hand that was her daughter's ceased to flutter.

The waiting-woman noticed that, and did what there was need to do, and a few minutes later went softly from the room, in which the two old ladies who were mother and daughter were dead.

THE WITCH-HARE.

It wasna day, it wasna mirk
Beneath the hingin' boughs o' birk,
As I gaed doun the dowie glen
I saw a maiden her lee-lane.

Her face was hidden from mine ee,
I cudna ken wha she micht be;
But whiles she grat, and whiles she sang,
And whiles she leuchit laigh and lang.

Her voice was saft as a croodlin' doo,
But oh! it garred my flesh to grue;
For, as I hid the birks amang,
I heard the owreword o' her sang:

'I sall gang intil a hare,
Wi' sorrow, and sigh, and care,
And I sall gang in the devil's name,
Ay, till I win hame again.'

Intil a great grey hare changed she,
Cam' loupin' owre the fern to me,
Cam' loupin' owre the bent and briar;
Her twa een shone like spunks o' fire.

Sma' time was there for thocht or prayer;
I loadit my gun wi' meikle care,
Wi' the siller token that Marjorie
Ae simmer gloamin' brak wi' me.

Then up and spak' the evil beast,
'I hae dune ye nae great skaith, at least;

And gin ye shoot wi' a bullet o' lead,
Ye'll wish that ye were lyin' deid;
And gin ye shoot wi' the siller bricht,
Ye'll wish your een had ne'er seen licht.'

But o' her words sma' tent I took,
I cam' o' a dour, godfearin' stock;
I fired at the heart o' the foul witch-hare,
And whaten an elritch cry was there!

Nae hare lay deid, but a lass red-lipped;
Adoun the fern her heart's bluid dripped.
I looked to see wha it micht be,—
Nane but my true love, Marjorie.

MAIDIE DICKSON.

CAMEOS FROM ENGLISH HISTORY.

CAMEO CCCXXXIII.

1780–1789.

THE EIGHTIES.

THE penultimate decade of the eighteenth century entered upon Europe with tokens of coming change, though the time was not yet ripe.

The Empress Queen died on the 20th of November, 1720, after forty years of a grand reign.

She was a noble woman, religious, conscientious, and upright, though sometimes warped in judgment by State craft, especially in her relations with France, when she set her envoy to make her young daughter, Marie Antoinette, work for Austrian interests, and thus laid up in store the bitter hatred of the nation for their young queen, who, in these days, was only a giddy girl.

Maria Theresa had six sons and ten daughters, of whom most survived her. She does not seem to have paid much attention to the training of her daughters, judging by the ignorance of Marie Antoinette, and the folly of Caroline, Queen of Naples, but she was an affectionate, though stern, mother to her sons.

Joseph, however, burnt to reverse all that he thought antiquated and superstitious, and to reform his hereditary dominions, after the fashion of the two philosophical sovereigns, Frederick and Catherine, forgetting what different materials they had to deal with. Ten different languages were spoken in his dominions, and there were almost as many different constitutions, as well as half as many different forms of religion; but he fancied they could be made all alike—all liberal, all German, all free of what he held to be superstition. He carried off the Crown of St. Stephen from Hungary, and refused to be crowned there, that he might not have to swear to the constitution. He broke up the old boundaries, and made thirteen governments with similar codes of laws everywhere, and German was to be used

in all courts of justice, and after two years was alone to be taught in the schools.

Some of his regulations were wise, some tyrannical, such as the one that no one might travel into other countries under the age of twenty-seven. And he caused to be drawn up to be taught in the schools a really absurd political moral catechism, in which maxims, framed like a parody of the Commandments, were to be taught to the children.

'Thou shalt not carry flags, nor wear high feathers in processions.

'Thou shalt not bring into the land any foreign breviary or psalter.

'Thou shalt not send out of the land hares' skins, or hares' fur.

'Thou shalt not keep useless dogs.

'Thou shalt not plant tobacco without thy lord's permission.'

The Roman Catholic Church was to be predominant, but greatly curtailed, the bounds of the dioceses altered, and convents broken up after the pattern of Henry VIII., and with the like suffering to the expelled nuns; images were taken from the churches, pilgrimages forbidden, and changes announced that must have been unbearable to a deeply religious, and often superstitious, people like the Austrians and Tyrolese.

The Pope, Pius VI., tried to remonstrate, and wrote numerous letters, but finding that they received no attention, he actually set out for Vienna on the 27th of February, 1782. Every token of respect was paid to him outwardly; the Emperor went out to meet him, and conveyed him in his own carriage to the palace, where he was lodged in the apartments which had belonged to Maria Theresa, but the externals were all that was granted to him. The Emperor and his minister, Kaunitz, listened with cold politeness to his expostulations and requests, and the back doors were blocked up so as to prevent private interviews with the clergy. Finding his visits useless, he only remained a month, and returned to Rome, having had the first taste of the humiliations and reverses that were in store for Rome before the century was over.

Joseph went his own way, with beneficent intentions, but ill-digested schemes. One of his favourite plans was to exchange the Austrian Netherlands for the Duchy of Bavaria, thus making his dominions more compact; but he hoped to accomplish this

as soon as the old King of Prussia should be dead. But Frederick, though aged seventy-four, and suffering from many disorders, was as alert and as jealous of Austria as ever, and continued to draw all the Germanic powers into a league against altering the old forms of the empire. Joseph was very angry, and called the Prussian the Anti-Cæsar.

This was the last great undertaking of Frederick, who was wretchedly ill, unable to ride, walk, or lie down with comfort, but as active-minded as ever, attending to business, and listening to all the books of the day. To the last day of his life he dictated despatches and signed papers, and his last word was the watchword of the day. No touch of religious thought or belief escaped him, and in his will he directed that his remains should be buried in his garden among his dogs. He died on the 17th of August, 1786, and Prussia can well call him great, for he had repelled an invasion from the greatest sovereigns in Europe, rendered his dominions wealthy, prosperous, and extensive, and guarded them with a splendid army.

Catherine was meantime adding to her empire by advances on that of Turkey, and, with an evident view to the Empire of the East, she had caused her two eldest grandsons to be named Alexander and Constantine. She bestowed great care on their education, and even wrote books for them; but their father, Paul, she kept in the background, partly out of jealousy, and also partly on account of a taint hereditary of insanity, which rendered him eccentric and unreliable.

She had a fleet on the Caspian Sea, and endeavoured to secure all the country round. She had forced Turkey to declare the Crimea independent, and no sooner was this done than, on a slight pretext, she laid hands upon the peninsula, deporting the Khan, and slaying the Tartars who resisted. In 1787 she set out on a progress to view her new dominions, and invited the Emperor Joseph to meet and accompany her. She and her suite, which included the ambassadors of England and France, travelled in sledges, day and night, along freshly marked roads, where relays of horses were ready, and enormous bonfires were kindled to light the way. On the Dnieper, fifty barges were ready, and in them the *cortège* embarked, enjoying the utmost luxury. One barge contained seven apartments, and a saloon where forty persons could dine. The King of Poland, under his private name of Count Poniatowski, had already joined her, and her voice faltered as she spoke to one whom she had not seen

for twenty-three years, and whom she had so cruelly despoiled and betrayed. Potemkin took a fancy to him, and thus he enjoyed some years more of his fragment of royalty.

All along the banks of the river sham villages were erected, and filled with flocks guarded by Arcadian shepherds and shepherdesses, concealing the dreariness of the district; and at Pultowa the troops imitated the famous battle between Peter the Great and Charles XII. Joseph had promised to meet the Empress and admire her triumph. Always rapid, he made his appearance at Lemberg far too soon, and after waiting twenty days, went on to Cherson, the appointed place of meeting. Not finding Catherine, he proceeded up the river to meet her; but her great barge proved to be aground, so she landed, and the two sovereigns went on together in one carriage.

At Kaidak, where they halted to dine, there was great consternation, for there was no provision for two Imperial visitors coming at once by land, and Potemkin, who had brought his own dinner, had just finished his meal. However, the scarcity of fare only added to their merriment, and on they went to Cherson, entering under a triumphal arch, inscribed, 'The way to Byzantium,' in Greek letters. In the Crimea, which Catherine wanted to call Tanrida, the lodging was in the ancient palace of the Khans, and Tartars were brought in to hail the new Government. The progress lasted as far as Sevastopol, where Catherine beheld her navy riding in the Black Sea.

Joseph, however, was annoyed at perceiving what an accession of power he had assisted in giving to his ally, his spirits were observed to be lower, and as soon as possible he quitted the Empress and returned to Vienna.

The Turks had a fleet at the mouth of the Dnieper, and war soon broke out again. Joseph endeavoured to make progress on the Hungarian side, and broke with Catherine. The Netherlands were in a state of revolt, unsettled by the disturbances in France, and by Joseph's attempt to part with them. His health was failing, and bad news poured in upon him. 'My tomb,' he said, 'should be inscribed, "Here lies a monarch who, with the best intentions, never succeeded in a single design."' He died, a worn-out, disappointed man, in his forty-ninth year, on the 10th of February, 1790, leaving his crown to his brother Francis II.

One horror was ever hovering over George III., namely, the threatenings of disordered brain, and these might well be

enhanced by the continued anxiety that his eldest son gave him. The Duke of York, at twenty-four years of age, returned from Germany, and though affectionate and amiable towards his father and sisters, was soon led into the same gulf of dissipation as his brother. The brothers were always much attached, but seem to have been equally devoid of conscience.

Disappointment in this favourite son probably may have hastened the attack which was coming on, and which seems to have been accelerated by a feverish cold, caught from getting wet through. The first symptom was curious. After hearing Mrs. Siddons read, the King placed in her hands a blank sheet of paper, with his own signature appended. As a conscientious woman, the great actress carried it at once to the Queen, who thanked her heartily for her discretion.

This was in the October of 1788. On the 22nd he held a levee, talking in a confused, excited manner, but standing the whole time, as he invariably did, even when conferring with his ministers in private, so that they were often utterly exhausted. Twice after this he went out hunting, and was five hours on horseback, but he continued incessantly talking till he was quite hoarse. He knew his own condition, and said to the Duke of York that he wished he could die, for he was going mad.

Still he was always kind, gentle, and courteous, and anxious, above all, to keep the Queen from knowing his state. Poor woman! she knew it only too well; and though she made the utmost efforts to conceal her grief, she could not always restrain herself from bursting into tears. On the 8th of November such violent delirium came on in the middle of dinner, with the Queen, the two elder sons, and several of their sisters, that it became absolutely necessary to place him under restraint.

He walked about, never attempting to injure himself or any one else, but continually raving and muttering over delusions. Once he burst in on a consultation between the ministers, the doctors, and his two elder sons, whom he did not see. 'Where is Frederick?' he said. 'Yes, Frederick is my friend.' Nobody ventured to approach him but Colonel Digby, the Queen's Chamberlain, who took him by the arm, and said, 'Sir, you have been very good to me; I am going to be very good to you, and take you to bed.' He submitted, as if he had been a child, and complained of a heaviness in the head. This was relieved by bleeding, but insanity was very little understood, and the treatment was most insufficient. The Prince of Wales,

expecting immediately to be king, took the command of Windsor Castle, and not only spoke and wrote with brutal unfeeling of his father's condition, but showed his mother great disrespect, in which such of the attendants as were worshippers of the rising sun, and even the Duke of York, imitated him.

A regency would almost certainly be necessary, but Pitt was determined that the powers it conferred upon such a man as the Prince should not be unlimited, and that adequate provision should be made for the guardianship of the poor King, and for the support of the Queen and her children.

The Chancellor, Thurlow, was bought over by the Prince's friends, especially Sheridan, by a pledge that under the Regency he should retain the Great Seal. He was a coarse violent man, of no high principle, nor generous nature; and when Fox, who had been absent in Italy and Switzerland, learnt the arrangement, he was much vexed, as the appointment had actually been promised to Lord Loughborough. However, he wrote to Sheridan, 'I have swallowed the pill, and a bitter pill it was.'

Party fought strongly over the amount of power to be allowed to the heir-apparent, from which arrangement Fox and the other Whigs expected to reap every advantage, while Pitt and the more loyal feared that unless the custody of the King were kept from them, he would be declared beyond all hope of recovery. Thurlow insisted that the Queen should still watch over him, and that his household should remain untouched.

On the very day on which the Regency Bill was about to be read for the third time in the House of Lords, decided tokens of recovery were made known.

The King, much against his will, had been removed to Kew palace, as the physicians complained of the distance of Windsor from London. He was rudely treated by his keepers, who declared that his wife and daughters must not be with him, and a German named Ernest actually knocked him down, but he rose, calling it a fall.

Shortly after this, a clergyman, the Reverend Francis Willis, rector of Wapping, and noted for his method with the insane, was called in with his son, a physician, and under their treatment improvement at once set in. Without reasonable cause, the former keepers had treated him as if he were bent on self-destruction, and would not let him have a knife at his meals, shave himself, nor cut his nails; but Willis trusted him, and further induced

sleep by giving him a hop pillow, and, above all, responded to all his deep religious feeling and habits of piety, which his former keepers had neglected or silenced. It was particularly cruel to him, as he was perfectly aware of his own state, and it was to his strong religious habits of self-control that Willis trusted chiefly to the hopes of his ultimate recovery.

He found *King Lear*, and read it over, telling his elder daughters when he saw them again that he was happy in having three Cordelias. Willis let him see and walk with the Queen, but the other physicians insisted on keeping them apart, apparently in the interest of the Prince and the Whigs, who feared lest there might be an attempt to rule through an imbecile sovereign.

However, by the end of February, 1789, there could be no doubt that he was completely rational and collected, and the only persons who denied it were his Regan and Goneril, his two elder sons. On the 10th of March, he took leave of his physicians, and the country was in a rapture, London was illuminated from end to end, even to the smallest cobblers' shops, and never was there greater national joy. The Queen and her daughters went out to admire the illuminations, leaving only the little Princess Amelia with her father. Miss Burney had arranged a poem of congratulation which the child brought him, and which ends with—

> 'The little bearer begs a kiss
> From dear Papa for bringing this.'

On the Sunday, and again on Easter Sunday, he received the Holy Communion from Bishop Hurd; and on the 23rd of April attended a great public thanksgiving at St. Paul's, when the splendour of the heartfelt anthems of praise quite overcame him for the moment. His sons were of necessity present, but in a very different mood.

All his ordinary duties were resumed, and it was well that loyalty had been thus enhanced, for perilous changes were afoot in the adjacent country, though at the moment all was hope, and those who admired liberty above all were full of enthusiasm, especially the young poets, Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge. After the recovery of the King, one of his royal progresses was made, this time through the New Forest and Dorsetshire into Devonshire, where Lord Rolle's pompous entertainment of him gave rise to a clever skit in a mock heroic poem called the

Rolliad, which old people quoted with delight long after Lord Rolle had lived to call forth the prompt good feeling of King George's granddaughter by his stumble at her coronation.

Just before this journey had been fought what was probably the last duel of a Prince of the Blood-royal and a Commoner. On a parade of the Coldstream Guards, Colonel Charles Lennox, nephew to the Duke of Richmond, stepped up to the Duke of York, who was in command, and demanded an explanation of some insulting expressions which the Duke was said to have used concerning him. The Duke ordered him back to his post, but sent directions, after the field-day was over, that he should come to the orderly room.

There the Duke said he desired to claim no exemption on account of rank, either military or royal. So an encounter actually took place on Wimbledon common, when the Duke abstained from firing his own pistol, and after Colonel Lennox's ball had passed near his head, there was a sort of apology.

The King showed much feeling when he met his sons again, but the Queen made no manifestation, being evidently too much wounded by her sons' conduct to their father, which was at its worst, in their disappointment about the Regency. The third brother, William Henry, Duke of Clarence, was affectionate and kindly, but exaggerated a sailor's rough coarseness and inebriety.

Coarseness was far too common. Fox affected it, probably to please the Prince of Wales, for he was a man of high cultivation, and much nobility of nature. The Lord Chancellor Thurlow was an absolute bear, and a great thorn in the side of Mr. Pitt, whom he constantly opposed and grumbled at even, and he was finally desired to resign the Seals in November, 1792, to his extreme mortification. 'No man has a right to treat another as the King has treated me,' he said, very unjustly. It was well that the King had recovered, and that Government was on a firm basis, for the condition of France could not but strongly affect English minds and policy.

THE MAIN CHANCE.

BY CHRISTABEL R. COLERIDGE, AUTHOR OF 'WAYNFLETE,' 'THE TENDER MERCIES OF THE GOOD,' 'THE PROPHET'S MANTLE,' ETC.

CHAPTER VI.

A HOLIDAY.

THE morning sun shone, and the air was fresh on the river; Florella's little room, high up as it was, seemed near the summer sky. The 'sun-kissed,' flame-bright flowers of her newest drawing made a point of light and colour in its cool, free space. Florella herself, in her clean linen dress, looked as bright as the morning.

'Is this what girls' "chambers" are like?' said Guy Waynflete, when, early on the day after his arrival in town, he had come to take her for an outing. 'I'll have to set fire to the Mill House before you come there, and burn all that dingy damask and gloomy mahogany.'

'Ah, wait till I do come,' said Florella, 'and we'll see the right thing for the damask and mahogany. But you like this?'

'Eh, don't I? It's all so clean and straight, not a corner for things evil. It spells—you.'

'I haven't filled it up with rubbish, and the colours are pure, and it takes in the river and the sky. It didn't cost much. Now, when you have looked at my yellow picture, I am going to personally conduct you all day. We'll go down the river in a penny steamer, to the Guildhall pictures. If we have time we can go into St. Paul's, and see how the mosaics are getting on. Then we will go on the top of an omnibus, and meet the Stauntons at the Haymarket Stores, and, after lunch, go with them to the Haymarket matinée, for which they have tickets. Could we do better for a friend from the country?'

'It's all right,' said Guy.

Most things would have been right when he and Florella were together for a whole long summer day, and soon they were on the deck of a nearly empty steamer which slowly ploughed its

way citywards, while the surface of the river sent up gold and silver sparkles, bright as if its waters were as stainless as when Spenser sang praises of the sweet and softly running Thames.

'Guy, you look thin,' said Florella, presently. 'Have you been working too hard?'

'No. I'm afraid work will be too slack presently. At Rilston several of the mills are working half-time; but I won't spoil our holiday.'

'This is a lovely time for a talk,' she said; 'and the holiday will be better afterwards. Tell me.'

Then Guy entered into the difficulties that beset him. Florella understood the technicalities of his work as well as he did himself; she knew when and why an outlay was needed, and when the incomings were small; how the difficulties of one firm affected others; when coal was dear or wool cheap; she knew how matters stood between labour and capital in the Ingleby district. She talked and listened as if during the past two years she had run the Ingleby mills herself; as, in a very real sense, she certainly had. And then at Waynflete, Ladywell Farm was unlet, and Flete Head was back in its rent, and there was a great deal for the landlord to do, and no money to do it with.

'If I could spend a thousand pounds on the house itself,' Guy said, 'it might be fit to let, or to live in. Now it is neither. Land is worth less and less, and there's no surplus from the mills to make up for it. Still we're not going to throw up the sponge. But, as we have often said, Aunt Margaret didn't know how things would be, or that it might be harder to keep Waynflete than to get it back. She thought, of course, that there would be plenty of money.'

'You care as much about keeping it as she did about getting it?'

'I do, sweetheart; there's only one thing I care for more! But, you know, there might come a point—it *has* not come, it *shall* not, no, it shall not; but there might be a point——'

He spoke half under his breath, looking away over the river. Then he suddenly turned round to her.

'But that's *not* going to be! Things are short of that yet. Only I wanted to have all anxieties over before you come to share them.'

'I expect they would have to have been over a long time ago then,' said Florella; 'but my chief one now is that you are dull and too solitary. I shall take notes when I come in August.'

'I am not at all solitary. There's Cuthbert and his "Faërie Queene" to look forward to in the winter. And I'm going, I think, to have young Maxwell Mervyn down to see what business is like. Then Wickham is not at all bad company. You haven't seen him!'

'Mr. Raby's manager? What is he like?'

'He's a gentleman, and has brains. He's a reader, and up to what goes on. In fact, he wanted me to join him in hypnotic experiments. He considers it all a branch of physical science, and, as such, worth studying. So do I.'

'Did he want to hypnotise you?'

'Yes.'

'Could he?'

'He shall not. Of course I could never for one moment give up the control of my own spirit. But because I hate the subject it will not do to shirk it.'

'It's strange that you should have had it brought before you,' said Florella, 'because Molly Edgell is always telling me that I have the proper investigating faculties.'

'Oh, you have, you have,' he said vehemently. 'A thousand times more than I. But, Florella, you have promised.'

'Yes; but she thinks I'm shirking.'

'No, no,' he said, grasping her hand. 'No; I will not have it! No, no; keep *that* door locked! Promise me again. Not a single experiment, in play or in earnest.'

'I have promised,' said Florella. 'But, Guy, I am not quite sure that one can tell *where to begin to leave off*, in order to keep one's eyes shut.'

'Since you say that,' said Guy, 'I see you *have* kept the promise.'

But she looked doubtful, and slightly shook her head.

'I won't have it for you!' he said, with a sort of fierce tenderness that would have been hard to resist.

'I shall always keep my promise,' she said, quietly. 'Does Mr. Wickham believe in nothing but physical science?' she added presently.

'He says not, and nothing else will come in question in any of our discussions. The door is safely locked.'

'Oh yes, I know that,' she said, quietly; 'and you mustn't lend the key.'

'I never shall,' said Guy, steadily; 'nor open it myself.'

She followed his lead, and turned away from the subject.

She knew that he would not let her follow him through that door; but was it quite as opaque to her vision as he supposed? There was a great deal for both of them on the hither side of it, and they put aside all the anxious subjects of their discussion, and gave themselves up to the happy present.

Florella made him notice all that she saw—lights and shadows, lines and curves. She could find joy in a cart under an archway, in every alternation of shade and shine.

Then there was the Guildhall with its pictures; Guy picked out in a moment those he had seen before.

'I never forget pictures,' he said; 'I can always recall one I have seen, or for that matter any real face either.'

'You know all your work-people's faces, don't you?'

'Every one. It's rather useful.'

They lingered in the hall itself, and speculated about Gog and Magog, then came out into the sunny court and admired the pigeons; made their way through the crowded streets to St. Paul's, and recognised the hallowing and softening of the colour gradually clothing it. Then Florella picked out the right omnibus with pride in her superior knowledge of London streets, and they went to meet Violet and Cuthbert Staunton; and after luncheon, at which the young men took the upper hand, and insisted on what the girls considered extravagances, they all went to laugh over the fashionable light comedy of the hour.

In between came words as to plans and prospects. Florella was to have her winter abroad, both for her aunt's sake and her own, for she might never get another chance of seeing, as she put it, 'so many new colours and such different light.' For on her return, let matters at Ingleby go as they might, Guy should no longer have to face them single-handed. Florella had moderate means of her own, her drawings had a market value; and, besides, wouldn't she manage far better at the Mill House than any one had ever managed for Guy before? He need not be the least afraid of anything being ugly and shabby when she was there to deal with it.

They all came back to the Stauntons' together, and there was a pleasant home-like evening with music and talk. Maxwell Mervyn was there, and received Guy's proposal to come and look about him a little at Ingleby, and there learn something of the conditions under which the money he had inherited had been made, and what the life into which he wished to throw himself was like, with prompt acceptance.

'Yes,' he said, 'I've given notice at the office. I shall be free at the August Bank Holiday, and then I'll come and see if I think it worth my while to stay there.'

'Why do you saddle yourself with that young cub?' asked Cuthbert Staunton, when he and Guy were alone together late at night.

'He's your cousin,' said Guy.

'I'm sure I never asked you to take him up.'

'I want some one,' said Guy; 'and Bob Palmer's heir and Attorney Maxwell's descendant seems appropriate. Besides, there's stuff in that lad. He is of the sort to make his way. He won't fool away his chances nor neglect his work. He's got grit.'

The speaker's thin, firmly closed lips, the alert air of his slim figure, every tone of his steady decided voice, showed his own possession of that inestimable if indefinable quality. Anything keener and more observant than the glance which he shot from under his long eyelashes, as he mentally weighed and judged young Mervyn, it would have been hard to find. His friend watched him. How hard this lad had worked, how steadily he had carried the burden of the unprosperous business and unproductive estate! He was only twenty-seven, and had never had a careless or happy-go-lucky youth. He was even a grave lover, though his love pervaded every strenuous thought and effort.

'His work takes the whole of him,' thought Cuthbert; and then suddenly Guy's light-grey eyes opened wide, a look still intent, but altogether new, the look of a dreamer and a visionary, came into them. It passed or was suppressed in a moment, but it reminded Cuthbert that there was a part of Guy Waynflete which could not be altogether absorbed in the management of Ingleby mills, nor in the pursuit of the main chance.

CHAPTER VII.

TENDRILS.

A GIRL, an adventure, and a hero to the rescue, have formed the basis for a future story in fact and fiction since the world began. When the girl is idle and susceptible it does not matter at all if the adventure is commonplace, and the rescuer only, so to say, a stop-gap for the hero. Katie Fielding mused over her

ignominious tumble into the mud, and Jasper Wickham's prompt appearance on the scene, as persistently as if he had borne her off slippery rocks, through foaming breakers, and had been nearly drowned in doing it. She dreamed of his firm hands clasping hers, and woke blushing and hiding her face in the pillow. The hope and the memory of chance glimpses of him filled her day; and though she was too well-behaved a girl at once to seek him out, her whole soul might be said to lie in wait for him. In short, she fell in love with him as quickly and as violently as the process could possibly be accomplished.

And then, poor child, kind as her friends were, she was, of course, a very lonely little creature, and the glimpse, even in cloudland, of a life of her own seemed liked opening paradise.

Jasper Wickham too, perhaps, was dull, and a flourishing, though suppressed flirtation was soon in progress, and filled the summer days for Katie with gloom and fire, colour and blackness, according as Mr. Wickham did or did not appear on the scene.

One evening in the early days of August she came hurrying up to her favourite stile, with flushed cheeks and eyes ready to brim over. Things had gone wrong indoors; they were going to go wrong all through the week. There was nothing but disappointment and mortification where she had looked for pleasure, and where all had been security a vague fear was creeping in. Mrs. Lennox had found fault with her teaching. She leant her arms on the stile for a minute and looked across the pleasant fields, and then with a sudden movement jumped over it, and pulling the little shawl she wore over her head, walked rapidly along the narrow, smutty track that crossed the pasture.

'I shall look like a mill girl with my shawl over my head,' she thought; 'then there'll be nothing odd in my being out.'

There would have been nothing odd in her taking a walk in her hat, but the shawl gave a pleasing sense of mystery and daring.

The fields were quiet, but Katie hurried across two or three of them with anxious, watching eyes and uncertain tread.

It would be very odd if she met 'him' there again, and very awkward.

It was no doubt awkward, though it was hardly odd that 'he' should be strolling through the fields between the collieries and the Mill House just after working hours when the air was pleasant.

He overtook Katie, who had turned abruptly round and was hurrying homewards.

'Taking an evening walk, Miss Fielding?' he said.

'Oh—I—I just—I didn't mean to come so far; you see'—pulling her shawl—'I didn't.'

Wickham led the way into a little black lane that branched off the fields between shabby hedges. It was not really lonely, though it looked so.

'What's the matter?' he said, with an air of proprietorship, and with an exploring look into her tearful eyes.

'Oh—most things. But I suppose *I* can't expect to have everything go well with *me*. Some things are nice. There's Miss Vyner. Have you seen her? She's at the Mill House. She's coming in the mornings to teach us to bicycle and to draw. She's awfully nice—and happy.'

'I haven't seen her yet.'

'Well, you will see her on Thursday at Kirkton, at the garden-party. But you won't see me, Mr. Wickham; *I* shan't be there.'

'Won't you? How's that?'

'Oh, everything's different here. At home, people asked me out always with Mrs. Lennox. But Mrs. Raby asked Mr. Lennox and her to the garden-party, and said she hoped "the governess" would bring the children over to tea in the school-room another time. I thought Mrs. Lennox—but she didn't say anything. And there'll be Max Mervyn, my own old friend, there too.'

'Ah, that, no doubt, is hard lines on you.'

'Oh no, no; I don't care about meeting *him*. But he was glad once to come to *us*.'

'Come, now,' said Wickham, 'who cares for fine parties? I don't want to meet Miss Fielding at Kirkton; I'd rather meet "Kitty Alone," out here.'

A light as of exceeding joy beamed in Katie's face. She began to say—

'Oh, you shouldn't call me——' but the sentence finished as he drew nearer, and all her troubles melted into air; the world began to thrill and glow at his voice and look.

They had come to the end of the little lane, and just ahead of them in the field they beheld the backs of Mr. Waynflete and Miss Vyner.

Wickham dropped her hand with an oath under his breath.

'Oh,' cried Kate, springing back and pulling up her shawl, 'oh, oh, I hope they'll take me for a mill girl.'

'No, no,' said Wickham, this being the very last mistake he could wish Mr. Waynflete to make about them. 'Run back—don't hide yourself. I'll overtake them.'

He shot away from her without another word, and she, disappointed, scared, and with no presence of mind whatever, stood trembling under the hedge while Jasper Wickham overtook Guy and Florella, exchanged a dozen words with them, and then walked rapidly away in the opposite direction.

Poor 'Kitty Alone' began to sob to herself. What an awful—awful disappointment that the meeting should end so! She lingered crying, and forgetting everything, till she heard footsteps, and saw the pair returning. Then she realised that they had probably only gone to the top of the field to see a special view of the distant moors in the sunset. She scurried back, and, as she hoped, escaped unseen, and came in, all but late for supper, flurried and agitated, but with her dull depression gone like mist before the sun.

The Raby invitation had brought Mrs. Lennox face to face with facts. It was quite true that in a neighbourhood where the few families with whom they exchanged invitations had all been friends of Katie's parents, she had gone out with them as an elder daughter. This could not be the case here, unless she was proclaimed as an adopted child, which had never been exactly the intention. Moreover, if Katie went out without the girls there would be constant interruption to their work. And *could* poor Katie teach them as they should be taught? And what would become of Katie if she could not?

The result of these reflections was a 'little talk' with Katie after breakfast the next morning, which sent her aggrieved and almost tearful to receive Miss Vyner when she came to look at the schoolroom drawings and give the proposed bicycle lesson.

Florella was a kind and sociable girl. She had plenty of time on her hands while Guy was at the mill. 'Cousin Susan' was not the most entertaining of companions, and she was quite ready to be friendly with the vicarage folk. Her trim dress, her composed manners, the fact of her engagement, gave her *prestige* in the eyes of another girl. And the morning was so pleasant that Katie quite forgot 'him' for a moment while learning to balance herself for the first time on a bicycle.

Florella attracted the little anxious, seeking creature, whose

wandering tendrils were ready to cling to any support, and after two or three of these meetings Katie had flung herself, figuratively and almost literally, at her new friend's feet; had told her much and enabled her to guess all; had begun to be jealous of Guy, and anxious to drive off Laura and Lily, so as to get her idol to herself. Not that Florella's sentiments were always what her admirer expected.

'It's more dignified and more interesting to have a profession and a footing of one's own than to be just nothing in particular,' she said.

'I wasn't brought up to be a governess,' said Katie.

'No? That's a pity. Couldn't you make up for lost time?'

'I don't know. You mean by reading books?'

'Well, by taking up some subject. What can't you do?'

'Laura's sums. She's in double rule of three. And do you think that's any use for a lady?'

After a little endeavour to set arithmetic in a new light, and to suggest means of acquiring it, there was a silence.

Then said Katie, 'If I've *got* to be a governess and can't teach, what *can* I do? Oh, what can I do?'

'Tell me a little of how it came about that you are a governess,' said Florella.

'Oh, when dear father died, Mrs. Lennox was very kind—they were old friends and neighbours. I've only twenty pounds a year, and no one nearer than mother's cousins, and every one said I must be a governess. So Mrs. Lennox said then I should be *her* governess, and come to them. It was next best to dear home. But to-day she said the girls were getting bigger——'

'That's just it,' said Florella, in her full sweet tones.

'And I do want *some* pleasure. Oh, I do! I do!'

'Of course you do. I hope you'll have plenty.'

'*You* haven't got to care about knowing things when you're engaged to be married.'

'But I don't want to be less of a person when I'm married than if I was single.'

Silence again. Katie was sitting on the schoolroom floor, in an attitude at Florella's feet.

'Max Mervyn and I used to play together. You've seen him?' said Katie, abruptly.

'Yes. Guy thinks him very clever.'

'Does he? Oh, but he's not clever, like Mr. Waynflete, or—

or Mr. Wickham. Do you know him? He's awfully clever, and so kind.'

'He came to dinner last night,' said Florella.

'Ah!' Katie bit the end of a pencil, and was silent again. Then she crept up to Florella and hid her face on her knee. 'I *do* love you,' she said. 'I never saw any one like you before. Please like me.'

'Shall we see if we can make friends with each other?' said Florella, gently. 'It takes time, you know, to see if we can. Friendship's very serious.'

'I know the moment I look in any one's face!' said Katie.

Florella smiled and shook her head. 'We'll see,' she said. 'Now the rain's over, let's come and give Laura another ride before I go back to the Mill House.'

Katie got up reluctantly. This was not her idea of how to make friends.

This conversation and her own observations sent Florella to Kirkton in some doubt about the clever Mr. Wickham. She knew well enough that she would have Katie Fielding on her hands, and that if ever any one needed a friend, this poor child did.

'You can refuse a *man* right off,' said Molly Edgell, once; 'but it's very difficult to refuse a girl who wants to be chummy with you.'

'I shouldn't like to refuse a man so as to do him harm,' Florella had answered. 'And one must refuse girls, in a way too. But one can't refuse to help them.'

Florella thought about Katie, and about Mr. Wickham, and as she thought, the fact that she had seen a girl scurrying out of the lane on the evening that he had joined them came back to her memory. She felt suddenly sure that she had seen Katie, though no words had passed to justify her in thinking so.

Of course, she had been already interested in the colliery manager from Guy's report of him, and she had every chance of studying his character, as Guy claimed her interest in all the discussions which he had come to hold with Wickham. New science and its bearings, or still newer speculations, would have seemed to Wickham altogether very unlikely subjects to interest a young lady. It surprised him that Guy, instead of dropping his interest in such matters while she was there, brought them under her notice, and appealed to her opinion.

Her few words, always to the point, her composed manner, and evident familiarity with every topic that interested her lover, surprised him. This was altogether a new way of spelling girl, and, combined with Florella's 'good society' air and artistic reputation, impressed him much.

He did his best for her benefit, and at Kirkton, not being well known to many of the guests, was especially glad to attach himself to the Mill House party.

He enjoyed himself there quite as much as poor Katie Fielding, taking a humdrum walk with Laura and Lily, supposed that he did. He certainly never regretted her absence. He resolved to be very cautious. Trifling with the affections of the Vicarage governess would not stand to his credit in his new neighbourhood. But, like Katie herself, he wanted to get all the pleasure he could out of a life which he regarded as dull and monotonous. Katie, like others, must take her chance, and take care of herself. She was not the first for him, and she was so ready that he hardly believed that he was indeed the first for her. He was a man likely to misunderstand her, and she, poor thing! was a girl easy to be misunderstood.

So the little game went on, under the rose, never coming to any crisis, and keeping Katie on tenter-hooks of expectation; while alongside of her passion there slowly grew up within her soul the desolating conviction that marriage, any marriage, was the only hope for her of a happy life. She viewed his every act through the powerful lens of her imagination, and perhaps he had some excuse for feeling himself little to blame.

And all the while Florella drew her with a force second only to that by which Jasper Wickham swayed her—a wholesome force that might have helped and saved her, but that it began to be crossed by qualms of jealousy and fears that this woman, whom she regarded as a queen, might also be a rival.

CHAPTER VIII.

HAREBELLS AND HEATHER.

'FLORELLA,' said Guy, 'I want to know what you meant by a remark you made that day on the steamer.'

They were riding together up the long winding road that led over Kirkmoor to Moorhead. Summer and fine weather had

taken the sting out of the moorland air, till it was gentle as well as fresh,—the first purple pink was tinting the heather, and a skylark sang loud overhead.

Guy Waynflete was at home on horseback. He used his horse more as a means of locomotion than is now often the case. In earlier life bad health had made him a poor walker, and long slow rides over the moor had been his chief means of recreation. He had never lost the habit. Every turn of the country was familiar to him, and he was as weatherwise as a shepherd or a gamekeeper.

Their ride to-day was full of the associations of their first knowledge of, their first interest in, each other, and when Guy's question followed a happy silence, Florella did not need to be told to what it referred. She looked up quickly.

'When I said that I did not know *when to begin to leave off looking* if I was to keep my promise to you? Don't you understand?' she said.

'No,' said Guy. 'There is a great gulf fixed.'

'I can only see anything,' said Florella, 'the picture that is in a thing—the way to help a person—any one's character, or their troubles, or what they wish—by thinking, letting the subject come into my mind, by imagining it. That's what people call inventing. And sometimes I get to know things about others that I never expected at all. Especially if I love them—especially you.'

'Yes?' said Guy, quickly.

'If, when—there is *more* to see, I might see that too.'

'Yes, yes; I *know*,' he said, laying his hand for an instant on hers, and speaking earnestly.

'Then,' she went on, with deepening colour, 'there is a Force that moves—that helps—I think it works in all ordinary ways through one to another, and I suppose the experiments of which you are afraid are specimens, perhaps extensions, of it. And that is what I meant by saying that it was difficult to know when to leave off, or when one is producing definite effects on others!'

Florella spoke slowly, as if she slowly defined her thoughts, but with her usual composure. The subject was familiar to her.

'I don't see into people in that way,' said Guy, after a moment.

'Perhaps you don't look,' she answered, smiling.

'There are physical effects,' he said, 'which are said to be produced by experiments—which may occur. You don't "see" on this material plane. And you shall not.'

'No,' said Florella. 'Do you think I could?'

'Oh, you might!' he said, with much emotion. 'See here, my love, I must speak this once. That spiritual force comes to your innocent soul in a normal, that is in a spiritual way. God forbid I should meddle with it or profane it! There is no entrance that way for evil things to you. But the secrets of nature—psychological marvels—these are *not* spiritual. If they reflect spiritual experiences, it means risk and temptation. Don't I know?'

'Yes, Guy, of course you do,' she said, with ready assent.

'It all comes of evil or leads to evil,' he said. 'It is rightly under a ban; human nature can't stand it.'

'Don't you think human nature may develop so as to be strong enough?' said Florella.

'I hope not,' said Guy, sharply. 'Keep on the normal and natural plane; there is much less chance of shipwreck.'

'But,' she said, 'it is not only on the physical plane, or always only in one's own heart, that evil is conquered. Some are called to fight it in and for other souls.'

Guy said nothing. His eyes widened and his face grew pale as he looked before him into the sky.

'I don't want to try experiments,' said Florella. 'I don't think they're necessary. Only it wouldn't do to shirk anything.'

'Oh, Florella, my darling, we're not called,' he said. 'There's plenty to do here in this blessed world that we all see. And, if any soul were cursed by such an honour, he must go into the wilderness alone.'

This time it was Florella who was silent. She did not answer him.

They rode on for some way without speaking again; and then Guy said in his ordinary manner—

'It is entirely a question of nerve and brain-cells, as Wickham says. Even so they're kittle cattle to meddle with.'

'I don't think I like Mr. Wickham,' said Florella.

'Don't you? Well, Rawdie loathes him—won't be civil.'

'Is he a good man?'

'He has never done anything particularly bad that I know of. But he's all for the main chance. Can't help it.'

'Do you think he wants to be married?'

'Ah, that makes a man greedy, doesn't it? He hasn't confided any sentimental secrets to me. Look here—just here you showed me the harebells. Blue is my colour of hope. You shall be married in a blue gown.'

'We'll see about that,' said Florella, as Guy put his rein into her hand, jumped off his horse, and began to gather a bunch of delicate swinging harebells.

'Do you remember?' he said, as he came back and held them up to her.

She did not speak, but looked down into his eyes as she took the flowers and put them into her coat. She remembered much more than he knew.

They soon reached Moorhead Farm, where the rest of the party had already arrived, having come by train and driven up from the station.

Mrs. Joshua Palmer, otherwise 'Cousin Susan,' a kind and substantial dame, was engaged in organising the excellent tea which had been ordered there. The Lennoxes were there, full of interest in the new scenery. Katie was with them, more interested in the effect of her new pink blouse and the pink roses in her new hat, as compared with Miss Vyner's neat summer riding-suit, than in the brown and green and purple of the moor—much readier to note each changing look on 'his' face than to study cloud shadows or gleams of sunshine.

Max was there, handy and helpful, running about in Mrs. Palmer's service; and, besides, there were the Rabys and old Miss Maxwell from Ouseley, whom Florella greeted with special pleasure and attention.

Then on the under side began a curious contention of wills and feelings. Max Mervyn was inwardly saying to himself that old Katie took the cake altogether for prettiness. He liked her face and her dress and her manners, ever so much better than he liked Miss Vyner's, and it was after all no end jolly to see an old friend. But then, he didn't quite want to appear in his 'own neighbourhood' as the Vicarage governess's old friend. He would have liked to get hold of old Katie and scramble up the hill with her, and have a good time as they used to have down in Hampshire when they were little tots. Max was a warm-hearted fellow, old times appealed to his affections. But then he was a person of importance now, a land-owner in the neighbourhood; he ought to be attentive to the Miss Rabys. It would be more suitable if that fellow Wickham consorted

with Katie and her girls. Dear me, they seemed to be having a very good time over there! He could hear Katie laughing.

Poor Katie did not laugh much or long, she had no desire whatever to renew old times with Max Mervyn. If 'he' would only seek her out now, before them all!

He did nothing of the kind. The Lennox girls claimed him as a friend, and he responded to their demands; poor Katie had a little hand-squeeze, a glance and a whisper to live upon; while 'he' in another moment was talking about game to the other men, or, worse still, discussing art with Miss Vyner. Katie wanted to hang on to Florella—at least, poor little thing, to *go shares*, and experience the excitement of jealousy, if she could not enjoy the rapture of satisfied longing. But the Lennox and Raby children went off together to pick bilberries, and called Katie to go with them, and talk to the Rabys's mademoiselle, before whom her French would be a terror and a disgrace. Anything was better than that. The elder ladies were strolling along the road or superintending the tea; Max Mervyn and one or two other young people came by. It was easy to outwalk mademoiselle, who did not like scrambling; and soon, by hap or by cunning, Max and Katie were ahead of the rest, climbing the hill in the same direction in which 'he' had lately set off at a brisk pace with Mr. Waynflete and Miss Vyner.

Max, spite of his scruples, was not sorry to have Katie for an audience; and she, though with watchful eyes and wandering attention, was glad to have a cavalier to herself.

'Well, Katie,' he said, 'who would have thought that you and I would ever be pegging up a Yorkshire moor together?'

'Oh, do you remember going to pick blackberries in the wood, and mother came with tea?'

Here poor Katie's eyes filled, and her voice choked, and a thrill went through Max's sturdy frame, and touched his honest heart.

'I say, Kits,' he said, 'they're good to you, aren't they?'

'Oh, Max, no one has ever called me Kits or Pussy-cat for such a long time! Oh, if you were only my brother—really——'

'Well, so I am, just as good as a brother; I'll look after you. You don't know how well I'm getting on with Waynflete. I'm not at all sure he wouldn't like me for a partner, if I was minded to put money in the concern. But I shall keep a sharp look-out. Wickham's a clever sort of chap. I pick his

brains too. I got all the story about old Attorney Maxwell and the Waynfletes out of him, though the old lady wouldn't tell me. Queer business it was too.'

'And is there really a ghost at Waynflete?'

'Oh, that's all my eye, of course. A boy tried to get a rise out of me with that story. I know better. These north country fellows think everybody else was born yesterday, and they're so close. "Mr. Guy"—every one at the mill calls him so—told me that there was no coal of any value on his land or mine. But I fancy Wickham thinks differently.'

'Mr. Wickham,' said Katie—how delightful it was to talk of him to an unsuspecting person—'Mr. Wickham always seems to me *so* clever.'

'Yes; he's no fool. What's that? Do you see a ghost on the moor?'

'No; but over there—there are some of the others. Isn't that Mr. Waynflete?'

'Yes; and there's Wickham. Talk of the—you know who. Always think Wickham's rather too—you know what—clever. And there's Miss Vyner. I say, Kits, shall we lie low? They won't see us.'

'Oh no, no, that wouldn't be proper; we ought to join them. Call out, Max,' said Katie, with red cheeks, and panting breath; and Max raised a stentorian shout—

'Hi, hallo! Here we are! Don't you hear the tea-bell?' Which, as he said, he thought would just give them a start, for they were all talking too much to see any one coming.

CHAPTER IX.

FAREWELL.

'THE question is,' said Wickham, 'can you steer the balloon?'

He, Guy, and Florella had reached the ridge of the moor, and all the country-side opened before them. On the one hand they looked across to where the chimneys of Ingleby mills were veiled in smoke; on the other, the irregular roofs of Waynflete Hall stood up against the sky, and the dark wooded sides of Flete Dale dropped down to the river-bed out of sight at their feet. Even on the high moor the air was still; a soft and lovely light bathed hill and valley.

They had come to a halt in the midst of an eager conversation. Wickham, stimulated by Florella's presence, and again surprised at the point of the few words she spoke, was talking eagerly and well. They all sat down among the heather to rest and enjoy the view. Florella watched Wickham as he talked with attentive eyes; Guy, somewhat silent, gazed across to where the windows of his house caught the glitter of the western sun.

'Give us your view,' he said, briefly.

'Well,' said Wickham, 'I want to know if it is possible to get Will Power into working order. Can you harness the force—tame it—have it at your orders? I believe that the world moves by conscious and unconscious suggestion from one to the other. It accounts for most things. By experiment you gauge and test it—see it at work. That, I think, is object enough. You agree with me, I think, Miss Vyner?'

'Yes,' said Florella, 'I think I do.'

'Well, then,' he went on eagerly, 'if this is so, surely it is a subject for scientific investigation to see how it works. Do one's thoughts set up other vibrations, like light and sound? Our bodies are certainly affected by what we call our minds. Why should one be considered a fool or knave for studying phenomena which undoubtedly do occur? So far Waynflete goes with me; he theorizes. But people don't stop at the theory in other sciences—in physiology, for instance.'

'No, they practise vivisection,' said Florella; 'but you would want to vivisect souls.'

'Like a true scientist,' said Wickham, smiling. 'I wouldn't stop in the pursuit of knowledge and power. However, let us agree that there is a limit to lawful experiment; let us at least reach it, and keep our heads cool and expect nothing but what we find. I don't see how Waynflete, granting as he does that it is a matter of scientific research, can stick at what are called "properly conducted experiments."'

Guy sat upright and looked full at him before he spoke. His voice was hard and clear, and his peculiar eyes had in them so intense a gleam, that for a moment Wickham turned his head away.

'The gods,' said Guy, 'have always been jealous. Too much light blasts the eyes. We are not to be as they. You shall not suffer a witch to live. The common sense of the ages is perfectly right. Traffic in occult forces ought to be made penal. We none of us know when to take off our shoes. The Ark of God

is sacred—dangerous; Uzzah was rightly struck dead for laying his hand upon it.'

Florella grew pale under Guy's look; and Wickham, not perhaps familiar with the scriptural illustration, looked puzzled and much surprised.

'In short, you object to raising the devil,' he said, lightly.

'That expresses what I mean as well as anything else,' said Guy, resuming his ordinary manner.

'Well, I think we might resolve him into an ether vibration,' said Wickham. 'But I'm prepared to risk facing him first, in any sphere in which he may choose to manifest himself.'

'If the devil,' said Guy, 'may be resolved into an ether vibration, then we may also be called upon to entertain the converse proposition. However, let us hear some of your facts and experiences.'

Wickham began to narrate some of the ordinary cases in which the will of one person is said to overpower that of another by means of hypnotic or other suggestion; the somewhat apocryphal young man, who put sugar into the coffee of his beloved aunt, under the impression that it was strychnine, at the suggestion of the hypnotiser, being a typical instance.

Guy sat opposite to him, with his elbows on his knees and his chin on his hands and a smile on his lips, making sceptical comments at intervals, comments very difficult to put aside. Florella sat a little apart, looking serious and still pale.

'Well, Waynflete,' said Wickham at last, 'you are playing devil's advocate against your own acknowledged views.'

'If I——' began Guy, laughing; but at that moment Maxwell Mervyn's loud and lively shout interrupted his words. He sprang to his feet, shook himself, laughed in quite a different fashion, and said to Wickham—

'Don't you know we're nothing up here if not *contrary?* We'll tell Cousin Susan to keep a look-out on the sugar-bowl when you come to tea,' then went forward and politely congratulated Miss Fielding on having climbed the hill.

He went on with the new-comers, and Wickham followed with Florella.

'Waynflete and I have had a good many discussions,' he said; 'we have generally agreed that these things were secrets of nature open to investigation.'

'Yes,' said Florella, in her soft, firm tones, 'we do think so. But it seems to us, that even these are so sacred and so

powerful that they ought to be approached'—she hesitated for a moment and then said—'with worship. We should think so, even if they did not, as they do, express to us the Force behind them.'

'Well,' said Wickham, 'I think they want a man to show a bold front to them.'

'Oh yes,' she said, 'that's quite true.'

No more was said, but Florella's eyes and voice impressed Wickham deeply. He thought more of her than of Guy's odd manner or unexpected remarks.

He walked by her side till they reached the farm, while Katie's eyes watched her, and her tongue made absent answer to Guy's civilities.

She ate no tea, and spoke crossly to Laura, then felt that Mrs. Lennox was looking at her, and hardly saved herself from a burst of tears. Why should she be miserable when everybody else was perfectly happy?

No other undercurrents were suffered to disturb what Cousin Susan afterwards called a very successful expedition indeed. 'Next time I take my tea at Moorhead, I hope it will be as your guest, my dear Florella.'

Florella kissed the old lady's kind plump cheek, and told her, smiling, that she hoped so too.

The hope was shared by many. Even Guy's old servants, who had lived with his great-aunt, loved the kindly, gracious girl, and were ready to give her a welcome. The housekeeper would come to her with mysterious confidences, asking her opinion with nods and winks. Cousin Susan prefaced every other speech with 'When you come, Florella—' and 'Guy——'

Guy looked round at his dingy walls and dark furniture, at the ugly square house which no modern improvements had ever touched.

'At least,' he said, 'I ought to welcome you with some clean paint and whitewash.'

'Not one coat of paint,' said Florella, 'till I'm here to choose the tint.'

'Next spring,' said Cousin Susan, and 'next spring' was on every one's lips.

After the picnic, when the long summer evening was drawing to a close, and Guy and Florella were for a few minutes alone, she came close to him, and looking up at him, said—

'Guy, I have something I want to say.'

'What? That I made a fool of myself?'

'No, no. But I don't think I like Mr. Wickham.'

'Why not?'

'I don't quite know. But I want to tell you every thought of my heart. It frightens me a little that you should be thinking of these things, and yet——'

'There can be no cause at all for you to be afraid. It can make no difference to me,' said Guy, gently. 'Now go on. And yet——?'

'And yet, I don't quite agree with you. I am glad you spoke out. Perhaps that is what you have to do for him. But, Guy, if the Power works for evil, it must work for good too; and perhaps some are called on to have the faith that can remove mountains, and heal, and save.'

'God forbid!' said Guy, under his breath, and she made no rejoinder, but crept close to him, as he took her in his arms and kissed her tenderly, passionately.

'Oh, my heart's love!' he said; and though many words and some days passed before she left him, this was the real farewell that they took of each other.

And though Guy hung over her with love and devotion, though no one could doubt that her presence brought him the very joy of life, he never suggested that there was no need to wait for 'next spring.'

CHAPTER X.

'SUBJECTIVE.'

SUMMER saddened into autumn. The moorland tints grew duller and fainter; the winds were cold and wild, and as they blew through the woods of Flete Dale, and circled round the little valley, the brown leaves rustled with a weird and suggestive sound with which other sounds seemed to mingle.

One cloudy afternoon Guy Waynflete was standing on the hillside, leaning over a gate, and looking ruefully at a small field of wheat, damp and discoloured in the autumn air. Harvest was often late in Flete Dale, but if corn was still out in the middle of October, there was little chance of its coming to good.

Rawdie was standing on his hind legs, his forepaws on the lowest bar of the gate, his ears up, and his amber eyes fixed

so intently on a shock of corn that he appeared to be sharing his master's anxieties about the harvest. Human ears and eyes failed to notice the quiver and rustle that revealed to him that some little furred or feathered prey hid from him among the straw.

Guy looked at his limp and sprouting wheat, which 'served as a symbol for much else in his affairs sorely in need of fair weather.

He had been to London to see Florella and her aunt off for the Riviera, and had come to Waynflete before returning to Ingleby to receive Cuthbert Staunton, whose promised visit was soon to begin.

The air was mild though dull and heavy. Guy presently drew a long sigh, and swinging himself on to the broad top of the stone wall that edged his field, lit a cigarette, and sat there thinking of many things.

Every field in that deep and narrow valley, from the rushing river below him to the rough wooded line that edged the gloomy sky, was his own; each one of them had been saved from confiscation by the treason of one ancestor, then lost by the folly and vice of others, redeemed once more by a brave and resolute woman, and now was his own to have and to hold. He thought it all over as he sat there watching his unprosperous harvest, considering his unlet farms, the deficit in his rental, the small and varying profits of the business by which this had to be supplied, and as he thought he set his mouth hard, and resisted the pressing inferences with all the force of his will. It should be *kept* as it had been won, it was bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh—the passion of his life, as it had been of hers.

'I took it,' he said half aloud. 'If I were to lose it!'

He turned his eyes away from the hayfield, and looked down at the dark rapid river. There where his eyes rested had been the old wooden bridge, which, breaking down, had nearly caused his death—his first improvement, the new stone one, was just out of sight—he knew where the old one had been by the jagged oak tree on the opposite bank. Yes, just there.

Guy drew his breath a little hard, and half smiled. He had overcome something before he became the owner of Waynflete. He looked back on the way by which he had come to it.

He saw himself once more, a careless, disdainful boy, pretending that he did not care for the family place, nor the family traditions—loving them all the while with his very soul; he felt

again the terror and the shame of the awful experience by which he had entered upon the family inheritance. That night when he 'saw the ghost,'—the ghost that was his own very double—when he had first had his share in the family experiences, came before him once more!

He recalled the years that followed, when brain and nerve, body and soul, had been almost ruined—but not quite. By a hand's length, by a hair's breadth, he had beaten the enemy. Was fortune going to be too hard for him now?

Nay, that was all over. The facts that he had to reconcile now were dear labour and cheap goods. The question he had to answer was a trite one. Was honesty the best policy? He was much too clever a trader not to know the tricks of his trade. Those noble old traditions, handed on by an honest woman, from days when the struggle for life was less sharp, in these hard times, were they compatible with even a margin of profit? There were certainly means of increasing profit, some such began to urge themselves upon his brain, and to show themselves in new points of view.

For he had heard only that morning from a large wholesale firm, supplied for years by Palmer Brothers, that goods serving their purpose equally well could be got elsewhere for less money. They could not afford to give the old price. And contracts of which once they had been sure had fallen to other houses who gave the same guarantees, and produced their cloth more cheaply.

Guy smiled grimly. 'I don't always know the devil when I see him yet,' he thought.

And then, within the bounds of Factory Acts, under the eye of inspectors, there could be variations in liberality from the head to his hands. The traditions of Ingleby were kindly, and kindliness in Guy's modern eyes stretched a long way.

'And it is very easy with capital to draw upon,' he thought. But he knew methods of saving pennies. He thought hard for some time, and then suddenly he ceased to think, and a feeling of deep depression seized upon him.

'I'd rather face the old fear,' he thought, 'than this one.'

And then he knew that there *was* a great fear to be faced.

'I've got to look failure in the face; I won't fail if it's in man to hold out. But if I do, I'd sooner see——'

He looked across the river. A tall figure was coming towards

him along the path from the bridge. He started, then recognised Jasper Wickham.

'Hallo!' he said, slipping off the wall. 'What brings you here?'

'Curiosity,' answered Wickham. 'I had to come to Over Flete for Mr. Raby, and I thought I should like to look at Flete Dale. But if I'd known you were "at home," I'd have called.'

'I'm staying for the night,' said Guy. 'I'm going up to the house now, if you care to see it.'

'I do. Show it to me,' said Wickham. 'I must get off at 6.40. My trap's at the inn.'

'We are a good deal out at elbows,' said Guy. 'I wish you could find us a solvent and liberal tenant.'

'It's picturesque,' said Wickham, glancing about him, 'but a trifle sombre in bad weather. But you know my hobby. I wanted to see why it got its reputation.'

'Because it deserved it,' said Guy, concisely.

'Ah! Will you give the correct version of the many legends I have collected?'

'It's very simple,' said Guy as he walked along, 'and like many other tales of the kind. A Guy Waynflete who went out with Monmouth, rounded on his friends, and saved his head and this property in consequence. I'm afraid he had acted as a spy previously. But the legend is that as he came home rejoicing, he was turned back from the bridge and bolted. Something I suppose drove him mad, for he rode like the wild huntsman till he and his horse dropped, and were found in the river. That is a fact. The church registers, and sundry old letters, testify that he occasionally "walked" afterwards. I don't think any one ever saw him except his descendants—lawful or otherwise. But quite recently, our people would tell you—no, they mightn't tell you, but a native could pick up tales of "t'owd Guy," or "t'owd lad," or "t'owd gen'leman."'

'Even I have heard him referred to,' said Wickham.

'Well,' said Guy, 'we were a poor lot, and in the days of my great-great-grandfather, a certain Attorney Maxwell—Mervyn's forbear, you know—got his clutch on the whole place. The old man was, I suppose, a sort of Squire Western; but his son—his son was not at all the typical Tony Lumpkin. He drank, of course; but he went to London, and was musical and a fine gentleman—no doubt a fool.'

'My story,' said Wickham, 'is that the old attorney offered

to come to terms if the young man came back by a certain date, and undertook to marry his daughter.'

'Well, he didn't get back in time,' said Guy, 'and his father shot himself. But Guy, when he did turn up, declared that the traitor's ghost had stopped him on the bridge. Nobody believed him, and he went off his head and died in a few hours. His brother was my great-grandfather, and became a working farmer. My grandfather and my great-aunt worked in Ingleby mills, and Thomas Palmer married her and educated her, and she got the place back, as I told you. My father and grandfather died young.'

'So it came to you?'

'Not at once. She left it to my brother, thinking him the most likely to keep it safe; but Godfrey did not care for it. I did, and do, and we came to an arrangement by which I undertook the charge of it. But here we are. Come in. There's some food in the library.'

Waynflete Hall was a long, rambling building of mingled stone, and black and white. The garden looked desolate and autumnal. Guy led the way into a low, raftered hall, and thence into a room, black with small oak panels, where some bread and cheese and oatcake were laid on the table. Guy spoke to the woman in charge, who appeared at his summons, and made a few further arrangements; then he showed his friend a beautiful old drawing-room painted white, and full of quaint furniture.

'Mrs. John Palmer, Miss Vyner's aunt, has had it for three years,' he said; 'she kept the place up well.'

'There's a portrait, isn't there,' said Wickham, 'of the unlucky young man whose watch played him a trick, or who forgot to wind it?'

Guy led the way up a slippery oak staircase, along a narrow passage, into a small octagon-shaped room at the end of the house. As its windows looked east and west, and the tint of the panels was pale, this room was full of light. There was hardly any furniture, but over the fireplace hung a picture, the head of a fair young man, in a powdered peruke, with wistful eyes and a weak mouth.

'Ah!' said Wickham, 'is that the poor beggar who went under?'

'Yes,' said Guy, 'that is Guy Waynflete; and there,' turning round to the opposite wall, 'is my great-aunt Margaret.'

This second portrait represented a flaxen-haired, wrinkled old woman with a high nose and a resolute face.

'The family type,' said Wickham, looking from the pictures to his companion, 'is easy to construct.'

'Yes,' said Guy, 'it's very persistent.'

'No portrait of the traitor?'

'No.'

He turned and led the way downstairs again, and as they sat over their luncheon by a fire which set the oak panels smiling, Wickham said—

'One thing strikes me. The man who walks apparently was stopped by a ghost. He couldn't have seen his own.'

'I supposed you would hit on that,' said Guy. 'But local traditions are not logical. I should like, by the way, to hear what the old lad has been doing of late years, according to local tradition.'

'The old game,' said Wickham; 'he is said to have tried to stop you twice—once when your aunt was dying, and once when the bridge broke. But I'm told that you "laid 'un," and that he'll walk no more.'

Guy looked up. There was an instant's pause, during which Wickham was conscious that the next move was an absolute blank to him. Then Guy said—

'I don't think he will—at least, to my knowledge. The thing's played out. I take the view,' he added, 'of a visualised suggestion. The thought, or desire, common to all, is externalised by a few. That theory doesn't commit you to what some writers call "the source of the message." That's another thing. But the *phenomenon* according to it is entirely subjective.'

'Then—before the type was set up or suggested by his death—do you suppose that the original traitor visualised the devil?' said Wickham, with lazy interest.

'A man's worst enemy,' said Guy, 'is always himself.'

'Ah, I see! You think that the traitor saw his own image or double?'

'Yes, he did.'

'This is awfully interesting,' said Wickham. 'So the hereditary type's worked out, you think, or, as the story goes, you have "laid the ghost." He seems to have bowled over the other poor fellows first. Well, I wish he wasn't so exclusive, and more willing to be shown off.'

There was a short but perceptible silence. Then Guy said with a change of tone—

'There's another legend about our valley which your faculties would enable you to test. Does Mr. Raby still think there's coal in Over Flete?'

'Well, he sent me to see what I thought of the place.'

'There is *some*,' said Guy; 'the question is how much. If the seam, running under Over Flete and Lady Well, Flete Head, and Ouseley, were worth anything, and there was any capital to work it with, it might make a good deal of difference to the owners of land here.'

'Ouseley? That's Mervyn's property, isn't it? He has capital burning holes in his pockets; get him to take it up. Or if a company could be formed?'

'I'll not be responsible,' said Guy, with a laugh, but with a glitter in his eyes. 'But I should like to hear what you report to Mr. Raby. Nothing could be done unless we acted in concert.'

'So he said. But at present it's all in the clouds or in the depths. Well, Waynflete,' as Guy moved, 'I'm no end interested in *both* the productions of your valley. Wish I was an expert in spooks, as well as coal-seams.'

'I'm afraid,' said Guy, 'you'll find the coal at least as subjective as the spook. Good-bye.'

CHAPTER XI.

COAL IN FLETE DALE.

WHEN left alone, Guy Waynflete, who had withstood the evil influence of his race, went back to the octagon room, and sat in the autumn sunset looking at the picture of that other Guy Waynflete, who had succumbed to it—'the poor beggar who had gone under.' Round about him and echoing in his ears was the strange rushing noise that recalled the last mad ride of the still earlier Guy Waynflete, the first recorded victim to the family fate. His image was printed on his descendant's brain. It was easy to recall it; Guy could do so without any sense of fear or horror. He was glad that he had not shirked the discussion of the subject, for shirking was an acknowledgment of former bondage. These other souls were in bondage

still. Behind the veil, beyond the senses, they were in the place of darkness and of cruel habitations.

Guy got up, and walked away to the window. He did not see even mental visions; but the condition of these other souls seemed to roll itself out before him, or within him. He felt their appeal. They were to him 'alive and aware.'

The sunset light died quickly away. Guy turned from the window, and went back to the vicarage, where he was to dine. All through the evening he and his friend the Vicar discussed the fortunes and misfortunes of the Waynflete folk. He knew them all. He knew how Joshua Wilson's little ones went hungry and bare because his master, James Fletcher, had to drive his own plough since he could not afford to employ a ploughman; and how James Fletcher lost his cows because his farm buildings were out of repair and insanitary, and his landlord could not afford to set them to rights.

'It is the house that Jack *didn't* build,' said Guy, bitterly. He frowned and sighed. He hated to do less than well. He would have liked everything on his estate to be the best that money could buy. He felt responsible to his finger tips. What right had he to these dear duties which he could not fulfil? Decidedly Fletcher's farm buildings must come before the fresh paint, the new conservatory, with which he longed to make a fair bright welcome for his bride at Ingleby. These troubles were not new, but troubles of the kind have a knack of rolling up like snowballs. They get a little worse every day.

That night at Waynflete Hall, he dreamed a dream. Somewhat strangely, considering the stuff of which he was made, he was not given to dreaming, but this dream was as clear as an experience; he remembered it perfectly when he awoke.

He saw below the stubbly surface of his fields, below their poor and stony soil, down to the millstone grit of the rock that pushed through it, and besides the grit he saw great beds and seams of coal, straight, level, and thick, black and glittering, for he saw as in clear daylight. He saw the coal fossils running up and through them, the horses' tails, and tree ferns, the club mosses and the conifers, which had lived, he thought in his dream, 'before the Waynfletes.'

Then the dream scene shifted, and he found himself in his office at the warehouse in Rilston, where his goods were stored and disposed of, and Maxwell Mervyn was there, and others

whom he did not know, and they were signing papers. Then he became aware that there was some one else present, whom he could not see; was it Wickham? surely Wickham was there. Or was it that other whom he had once known? 'I will wake before I see him,' he thought, suddenly knowing that he was dreaming.

And he did wake, in the darkness of the night, and sprang up and struck a match, for in the dark how could he tell if there was anything to be seen in the light? But there was nothing there, as he flashed the light round the room.

'I never saw anything much plainer than that coal,' he thought, as he put out the light, and lay down again. 'I could make a drawing of the fossils in it. The people signing the papers were the shareholders who are going to work the coal; Maxwell Mervyn was one of the chief ones. I don't think I knew that while I was asleep,' thought Guy, surprised at the clearness of the conviction.

He lay thinking in the sort of lucid impersonal way in which thoughts come in the darkness and quiet of the night, about his out-put and his income, and how to make them match.

He thought of the sins of his forefathers, and how through them poverty and vice had come to be the rule in Flete Dale. And it seemed to him that the living souls of his fathers knew it as well as he did, and suffered for it more.

And he had taken it into his hand 'to restore the family,' as his old aunt had said; to do his duty by the place, as he himself had thought. 'And now it must be skimped and scamped and starved at every turn, because I've no money.'

'If the mills have to work half-time, or to turn off hands, then—why, then, there would be Fletchers and Wilsons by the hundred instead of by the one or the two, and the hunger and drink and despair—I can't keep it all to myself.' And then all the ways of making and of saving money, of which he had thought in the morning, came as clear pictures before his mind.

Visions of shoddy where shoddy was not acknowledged to be, of cheaper processes, of a lower standard. How for a certain large Government contract he could offer terms so low, that he would be almost certain to under-bid other firms. And the good name of the firm gave such an advantage. He knew exactly how it could be done. There were so many degrees between anything that could be called dishonest

dealing and the good measure, almost running over, of Palmer Brothers.

They could not go on having a standard of their own; that of other great business houses of good repute ought to be good enough for them. The details of professional honesty are never simple. In no profession are they altogether a matter of course.

These thoughts all came to Guy one after another without volition of his own. Now suddenly he seemed to realise again the 'original traitor,' as Wickham called him, not as a shameful ghost, but as a living man. He saw the treason from the traitor's point of view, how wife and child and home and life had dipped the balance against barren honour. He realised death and torture; and all the worse reasons that might have seemed the better, repentant loyalty, hopeless defeat, duty to king and country, formed themselves so freshly and clearly in his mind, that he seemed to be thinking them out for his own use. Yes, this was how the poor traitor had thought, until—until *that* had been shown to him, which Guy already knew.

Guy had been awake all this time; perhaps sleep now came upon him, for he felt the summer breath of the moor in its pure cold freshness, and Florella stood among the heather, with harebells in her hand.

'They are very difficult,' she said, and with that Guy started into full wakefulness, as the autumn dawn came flooding in at his uncurtained eastern window; rooks cawed, and cocks crowed, while Rawdie, jumping off the bed, avowed his opinion that it was time to get up.

Guy faced the daylight. He had to get back to Ingleby by an early train, and settle, with wide-awake faculties, whether he should send in tenders for that contract at the terms which had occurred to him, and if it was accepted, do the best with it that he could. On the whole he would rather be ruined by endeavouring to fulfil it, than fall out of the running, because he would not undertake it.

All through that hard day of work and consultation, while he was making his own energy and enterprise felt through the whole complex organism of which he was the head, he kept to that strange conviction that those living souls who had gone before him were with him in his fight with his fortune, lending him their strength, or hampering him with their weakness. He sent in the tender. At what amount of sacrifice he would fulfil

it, in case it was accepted, time must decide. He had credit, he had brains and courage. New possibilities occurred to him.

After the die was thus cast, as he sat alone at night by the fire, he said to himself that it was well that he had played this bold game. The Demon of his race was cowardice. It was the spirit of fear. Whether it took, as for some of them it could, a presence and a form, like the terrible influence that had haunted his youth, or whether it was invoked by the normal troubles of a difficult life, the thing to dread was still fear, the thing to do was to fight.

Guy had fought; he looked back on those past terrors, and felt that he could never again experience them. No vision or hallucination would frighten him now. The spirit of fear would never rise again within him to give such spectres force. But those others? He experienced a conviction.

'If my soul liveth,' he said to himself, 'so do they. Well, if St. Paul knew what he was saying—and he mostly did—when he declared that he was ready to be accursed for his brethren, it was a most tremendous thing to say; I could not say it!'

(*To be continued.*)

FROM MY ATTIC WINDOW.

The Sage a Brother.

THE last of the Carlyles has died at Toronto. She was Mrs. Janet Carlyle Hanning, the sister of the Sage of Chelsea, and now at the age of eighty-five she has passed on to join the rest of the members of the divided Ecclefechan family. She was a sweet old lady, unaffectedly proud of her famous brother, and treasuring little mementoes of him and numbers of his letters. Her husband, who had been in the service of the Great Western Railway of Canada as general foreman and train despatcher at Hamilton—this was the brother-in-law of Thomas Carlyle who never kept an appointment—was not financially very successful. And on his death it was on the money her brother left her that she lived in a delightful retreat in Sixteen-mile Creek. She called it 'Comely Bank,' in memory of the little Edinburgh home to which Thomas had brought his young wife, Jeannie Welsh, 'a sweet, nice, lively, very kind, very pretty, loving woman,' Mrs. Hanning used to call her. In this quiet retreat she lived, with 'the Carlyle pictures,' showing the various homes of Carlyle, from the arched house at Ecclefechan to the red-brick London house in Cheyne Row, on the walls. And in places of honour were the little white sugar-bowl, and a footstool from the little farm home.

Her letters were her chiefest joy, and nothing Thomas Carlyle ever wrote shows him so greatly and simply affectionate as these letters to his 'dear little Jenny.' He gives her affectionate counsel on marriage (for the nonce Saul was among the prophets), and says—

'It is very rare and very fortunate when two parties that have affected each other from childhood upwards get together in indissoluble partnership at last. You must take the good and the ill in faithful, natural help, and whoever or whatever fail you, never fail one another.'

And amid his literary preoccupations Carlyle did not forget

the 'shirts' which his 'dear little Jenny' was making for him. Why not, he asks, use them as a wrapper to some cherished portrait which is to come to him? But he makes the suggestion hesitatingly, for he adds, 'I am somewhat inexperienced in these things.'

Some of these letters were more like the stormy philosopher as we know him, and were written in intervals of feverish work. Once he wrote:—

'Our money runs fast away daily. It will be done at the time this book' ('The French Revolution') 'is done; and then —my destiny, as it were, ends.'

Later, when he had been absorbed in 'Oliver Cromwell,' and had finished it, he sent these lines, characteristic truly:—

'I have this moment ended Oliver; hang it! He is ended, thrums and all. I have nothing more to write on the subject, only mountains of wreck to burn. I am to have a swept floor again now.'

And this loving, simple-hearted old lady, away in Canada, outliving all her kin, treasured these mementoes of the dear dead days and the brother whom she had worshipped. And we, the public, seem through her to catch a glimpse of the simple love and faithful heart which was underneath all the roar and storm of the querulousness of the old man of Chelsea which he showed chiefly to 'his little Jenny.'

* * * * * *

Home-making. 'Marrying is easy, but housekeeping is hard,' the old proverb says. I would vary it by substituting 'home-making' for 'housekeeping,' and remembering that the two are not the same thing. A good housekeeper sometimes makes a bad home-maker. A home is a place for rest, and peace, and comfort, and love. That the house was made for man (which includes woman), not man for the house, is a truth the most excellent housekeepers are apt to forget. When an unresisting man is swept out-of-doors in a passion of cleanliness, or punctuality becomes such a religion that it is necessary to feed when one is not hungry, or to go to bed when one wishes to stay up, the home has been sacrificed to the house. It comes near to being what Emerson called 'the vice of housekeeping,' which is, 'that it does not hold man sacred.' Principles of law and order, and cleanliness and tidiness, are necessary and good. But the strongest principles are those that will bear a little bending.

But withal, one of the essentials of good home-making is good

housekeeping. And it's only wonderful that more homes are not wrecked by their mistresses' housekeeping, seeing that, generally speaking, girls are shot from schools termed 'finishing,' or from high schools or colleges where there is no ending, to become, after a period of uncertainty, the managers of households—a post requiring some technical knowledge and more tact. In Germany, which is before all things a housekeeping though perhaps hardly a home-making country in my understanding of home, there are schools where girls on leaving the other schools pass to learn housekeeping. In the school in South Germany with which I am acquainted, there are from ten to twenty boarders. They make their own beds and dust their own rooms. Once a month they alter the position of the furniture, so as to learn how to arrange rooms. Frequently they pack their clothes for visiting, and the head-mistress inspects and criticises. Four of them take charge of the house every week, order and help to prepare the meals, inspect the house, and see that the servants have done their work. In the afternoon they arrange tea and wait on the other students and visitors who may happen to call, and in the evening act as hostesses for the simple evenings of music and games. At night they go round and see that everything is cleared up, the doors and windows secured. The girls who are not housekeepers for the week make, and mend, and darn, and carry on their own studies, plan dances and entertainments if it is winter, arrange flowers, and do all the etceteras of the house. This sort of thing would be very good for many girls' health when their brains are overtaxed, and coming as a kind of interlude would start them in homes of their own with less of tremor and fear. Only they must be taught as well that soul as well as method goes to home-making.

* * * * * *

Brave Poor Things. Of all the 'brave poor things' this world holds, I think old gentlewomen without means are the bravest and poorest. In Mrs. Ewing's story, from which the phrase comes, the boy whose own life had been marred by accident made a list of all maimed and broken lives, and called them the 'Brave Poor Things.' But though the lives I have in mind are not in that sense maimed and broken, those words rose to my lips when I heard some of the tales which Christmas charity brought to light. There is a society in Leeds with the clumsy title of the Leeds Unmarried Women's Benevolent Institution. But the clumsiness of its title notwithstanding, it is doing the

most delicate of all work—helping ladies who have only learnt to know want in old age. Most of them semi-invalids, all of them unfitted to fight with the world, and profoundly ignorant of money matters, their case is sad indeed. Just before Christmas the treasurer went round with her parcels. One visit was to an ex-governess, living with an ailing brother and invalid sister; and all these were existing on an income of £25 a year. It was half-past ten when she went in, and cups and saucers and a crust were on the table. 'You are late with your breakfast,' the visitor half-laughingly said. The answer was given simply. 'Yes, we make it as late as we can, to bring it nearer our next meal, at six.' And yet in earlier days those women had not only had food enough and to spare, but all the dainty refinements and mental refreshment which to educated women are almost more than food. Another pair of sisters, also once teachers, both over eighty, burst into tears when the parcel was brought in, exclaiming, 'It's too much! How good every one is!' And they neither had ever enough to eat, and the less said about fire the better.

* * * * * *

Concerning a Living Wage.

Such facts—and these might be equalled or exceeded in every town in England—make one think as well as feel. Economically, there is something wrong. Morally, there is something wrong. These women had all worked hard and earned their living in their day. But no one ought to be said to be 'earning a living' who is not earning enough for to-day and sufficient fraction for the to-morrows, where work must stop. In other words, a living wage must economically include living for to-day and a margin for saving. But it does not. Ask the hospital nurse, the average daily governess, all but a few of our highly-trained high school mistresses, the average woman journalist. Do any of them earn enough to supply their reasonable wants, not only their dire need, and yet leave enough for an old age? Marriage? Yes; a certain proportion will marry. A certain proportion will die early in harness. But the remnant? It is a sorry outlook for them. It is a very large question, and as difficult as it is large to say how it is to be set right.

One little alleviation of the terror has been tried, and, I believe, with success—namely, retiring to live in small communities in country villages where living is cheaper, and where joint resources may obtain more of comfort than they could

singly. It is only a mitigation, not a cure. But to suggest even a mitigation relieves me.

* * * * * *

'The Best is yet to be.'

But old age is not designed to be a time wherein one just hangs on to life, only just succeeds in keeping the flame burning. Surely our poet of old age was not altogether wrong when he said—

'Grow old along with me;
The best is yet to be.'

Surely the light at eventide ought not to have to run so great a risk of being hidden by clouds of earth's making.

One of the tendencies of these new days which is wholly good is the different sentiment with which old age is regarded. It is no longer thought of as half comic, semi-ridiculous, a time of vacuity and negatives, 'sans teeth, sans hair, sans everything.' Unless, indeed, the old make themselves ridiculous by trying to appear young. Sweet seventeen is still sweet, but with the sweetness of girlhood, not of completed womanhood. The absurd affectation which made a woman try to conceal her age, and never acknowledge to being more than twenty-nine, is dying —dying hard, perhaps, but still dying. This is due partly to the fact that in these days a man or a woman is, or should be, still young, athletic, and fresh at thirty-five or forty. Whereas, in the days of Miss Austen, she was thought of and spoken of as if she had had her day and ceased to be at thirty. At forty-five and fifty-five, a life lived hopefully, healthily, and actively, is at its prime. Many a man and more women have begun their life-work at sixty. And with ripened judgment, broad experience, ever fresh sympathy, and a heart full of love, the season of rest and waiting for the end, which is another beginning, is often a time of peace and light and understanding—

'The last of life for which the first was made.'

* * * * * *

What's in a Name?

The future of our coal supply, or rather whether our coal supply will have any future, may be an important—I may say, a burning question. But it is nothing compared to the question of our name supply. When we have used all the coal we must burn wood, and after we have burnt all the wood—the deluge. But the supply of names is coming to an end much sooner. Our population is increasing alarmingly. Already the confusion in some aristocratic neighbourhoods, where epidemics of Dorothy, or George Herberts,

have broken out badly, is terrible. And in time the surnames will equally cease to be anything whereby you can be distinguished. The State will have to take the matter in hand along with the water supply and vaccination, and number us all. The object of a name is presumably to distinguish one person from another. But that desirable end is speedily growing unattainable—first, by the epidemics I have just alluded to, in which multiplication causes vexation, and division is impossible; and also by the infirmity of many noble minds (I suffer from it badly) of being unable to remember names at all. My infirmity is very simple at present. I only forget. But there was a gentleman at the Thames Police Court recently who had the disease in a complicated form—he misremembered names. He demanded a summons against Sir Donald Currie for hitting him on the head with a shin-bone, at No. 11. Where and what No. 11 is did not transpire. But for a time things looked black for Sir Donald Currie, whose reputation up to that time had been unconnected with shin-bones, either of his own or any one else's. But he was saved. Upon examination, it turned out that the gentleman's assailant had not hitherto borne the name of Sir Donald Currie. In ordinary society he was known as Morriss Kelly; the man was simply suffering from the name disease very badly. But to me it opens up a suggestive picture of what might be. After all, what is in a name? Why should I not forget my own name, and call myself Rudyard Kipling, and be offered one and sixpence a word for all I write, exclusive of America, by eager publishers? Why should you not call yourself William of Germany, and send off your only brother to China? Names are nothing. Only it ought to have been thought of and arranged for two generations ago.

ANNIE GROSER HURD.

THROUGH PINK GLASSES.

IT is often refreshing to come across a tilt at established beliefs. A good deal has been heard recently of the Baconian origin of the plays attributed to William Shakespeare; and now we have Mr. Samuel Butler with his new book on 'The Authoress of the Odyssey.' The title of the book shows pretty clearly what you have to expect. It is a severe shock to find any one advancing gravely the theory that the 'Odyssey' was written by a woman. But Mr. Butler has yet another blow at received opinion in reserve, for he contrives to make out a strong case for the work having been composed at Trapani, in Sicily. I have been rather amused to note the somewhat tentative attitude of reviewers towards his book. Very few, indeed, have attempted to tackle the main questions; they have confined themselves in general to carping at points of scholarship; and the majority profess to regard the theories as mere jests on the part of the author. Personally, I am convinced of Mr. Butler's absolute sincerity—whatever may be the merits of his case—and it is difficult to understand any careful reader of the book holding a contrary opinion on this point.

* * * * * *

I confess I should like to see a reasoned criticism on Mr. Butler's theories from the pen of some distinguished classical scholar, who would be content to sink minor details of nice scholarship. I take it that the author is not what is commonly known as a 'nice scholar;' it is possible that he pays too little attention to the small points of scholarship; but there can be no question that he is a most ingenious theorist. He has travelled much in Greece and Sicily; and perhaps knowledge derived from that kind of source is worth more than untravelled professors are apt to think. He knows the language thoroughly in his own way—I believe he has translated, or is engaged in translating, the 'Odyssey' into English prose (of a rather different order to that commonly employed in such cases)—and I hope

some day to see the result in print. Judging by the specimens he gives in the book under discussion, it should, at the worst, be good racy English. 'The Authoress of the Odyssey' is the most stimulating book I have read for a long time, and it will probably have the good effect of setting many (as it has set me) to start reading the 'Odyssey' again in the original. And that will be something accomplished, even if the majority get no further than I have done.

* * * * * *

The last year or so has seen a host of books published dealing with the growth of our empire; lives of men who have worked and fought, often trammelled by orders, or acting in defiance of their superiors, but men to whom we owe in great part our colonies and the preservation of the Indian Empire. Not the least of these was Sir Stamford Raffles, whose career has just been sketched for us by the practised hand of Demetrius C. Boulger. The story of his life is interesting and instructive. Practically on his own responsibility he secured Singapore for England, and was rewarded, after a manner that is not without precedent in similar cases, by the total loss of his property. First the ship in which he was bringing home his goods (uninsured) took fire, and he lost a matter of £20,000; then came the failure of an Indian bank, in which was lodged some £16,000 more. These two blows left Raffles at the end of his career a ruined man, and the East India Company requited his services by pressing for payment of debts amounting to another £20,000, finally accepting half the sum—it was all she possessed—from his widow. Readers of this history will feel that some reparation is due to the memory of Sir Stamford Raffles.

* * * * * *

Prince Henry of Orleans is too often and too noisily in evidence for Englishmen to take him quite seriously. But it is possible that his book of travels 'From Tonkin to India, etc.,' which has just been translated by Mr. Hamley Bent, may cause us to regard him with a certain amount of respect. The story of his wanderings in 1895 makes very pleasant reading, and is adorned with several unexpected flashes of humour; while there are several elaborate appendices for the benefit of those seeking information on geographical or scientific points. The general reader will find plenty of adventure, particularly towards the end of the journey, when the food supplies gave out, and the expedition was compelled to break up into small parties. It is

a pleasant surprise to find less animosity towards Britain and things British than might have been expected, bearing in mind the Prince Henry of Abyssinia. Occasionally he even betrays admiration for our methods, in encouraging trade and so forth. But then it is not the French who are a nation of shopkeepers. The book is admirably printed and illustrated.

* * * * * *

It is becoming more and more the fashion to denude our heroes of all heroic qualities. We have been accustomed now for some time to find foibles, at the least, in the central characters of our romances, and it is much if the author allows the good to predominate towards the end of the story. Novelists have found out that their readers demand more subtlety in characterisation than our fathers were content to find: human nature is a complex business, and they paint it as such. It is certainly curious to reflect how easily satisfied we were, in the dark ages, with our simple types. The change came gradually. First of all, I suppose, some daring spirit conceived a handsome villain; by degrees the hero was robbed of a few unimportant attributes —he was given, perhaps, grey hair or a bald head—or he possessed a face that only became good looking under stress of intense emotion. Later, the heroine's character was insidiously attacked, and an era set in of unfeminine romps, culminating in recent years in the evolution of the New Woman. Really, I begin to think that it is high time we abandoned the old-fashioned nomenclature, and ceased to talk about heroes and heroines any longer.

* * * * * *

These few remarks are suggested by the reading of 'Derelicts,' by William J. Locke. Mr. Locke has already achieved a certain reputation as a writer of novels, marked by a good deal of cleverness in character-drawing, and some strength of moral purpose. Sometimes there is a trifle too much of the latter for my taste, for I confess to not caring greatly for the 'novel with a purpose.' When we meet with Stephen Chisely, the protagonist of Mr. Locke's last novel, he has just served two years' imprisonment in gaol for misappropriation of funds. The story is concerned with his subsequent struggles in order to gain an honest livelihood, narrated with considerable power, and with a perhaps unnecessary scorn for the Pharisaical attitude of a world that has not embezzled and been found out. But the book is thoroughly interesting, and Stephen, in spite of his unheroic

start, finds happiness at the end with a little concert-singer, who has also had her history. Far from the madding crowd of early acquaintances, they seek retirement in the obscurity of a book-shop. 'Derelicts' is certainly one of the best novels that Mr. Locke has hitherto produced.

* * * * * *

I have always had a secret kindness for stories dealing with the Wild West—the adventures of cow boys, sundowners, and other fearful wild-fowl in the land of miners and ranche-owners. A volume of short stories in this kind is perhaps preferable to one long novel: one gets variety of *locale* and character, and it is possible to have too much of a single cowboy. People who are of the same opinion as myself in this matter will like 'Strong Men and True,' Mr. Morley Roberts's latest collection of tales. After Bret Harte, there is no more competent handler of this class of subject than Mr. Roberts, and in certain points —as richness of vocabulary—he is unsurpassed. Some of these stories are grim, some humorous, and several offer a pleasing combination of both qualities; of their class, they are excellent examples of what a short story ought to be.

E. H. LACON WATSON.

The China Cupboard.

ARRANGED BY CHELSEA CHINA.

(*For the regulations of all 'Monthly Packet' Competitions, see p.* 240.)

FIRST SHELF.

Chelsea China thanks several kind correspondents for pretty Christmas cards, which have given her great pleasure. Will Miss A. M. Mercer be so kind as to send her address? Chelsea China is ashamed of having lost it, and, in consequence, of having kept *The Haunted Chamber*, kindly lent to her, for far too long a time.

CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS.

Lucky mince pies, Christmas carols, decorations, Santa Klaus, wassailing, exhaust the list of Christmas customs personally observed. The mince pie solemnity appears to vary. According to the best authorities, your mince pies must be eaten between St. Thomas and Epiphany, in twelve *different* houses, to ensure twelve lucky months.

But in Chelsea China's family they might be eaten in the same house, and the mince pies were *made small*, so that two might be consumed at the same time. The silence during eating, of which *Brown Linnet* speaks, was not considered necessary.

Of Christmas carols we all observe a good many every year. Some of us remember the London Waits. Decorations have also come under the personal notice of many of us. Those who are supplied with lovely hot-house flowers, and convenient tins and vases, don't know what it was to make evergreen wreaths three hundred yards long, and to break up all the sprays *yourself*, after having thawed the frozen boughs at the vestry fire! That was decoration! Or to thread horrid little berries, and twist them about, although they always turned black, and never showed at three yards' distance! Santa Klaus, and Christmas trees, and a great increase of Christmas presents, were 'made in Germany,' and most of us think very prettily made, too. Christmas cards will, perhaps, interest Lord Macaulay's New Zealander.

The wassailing is the most uncommon of the customs described, and Chelsea China therefore gives the prize to *Lindum*, and adds *Barrow's* 'Vessel Cup,' which is, of course, the *wassail cup*. In Devonshire they wassail the apple trees. Chelsea China has never come across a Christmas doll, though a 'May doll' is not uncommon. No doubt it hails from the remotest antiquity. Chelsea China faintly remembers seeing Christmas mummers, but not well enough to describe them. There were also customs in Yorkshire which must have been very curious, of which she often heard. One was spoken of as 'the old tup'—a ram; this visited the houses at Christmas. And she thinks there was also an 'old horse.' She is inclined

to think that some of the customs connected with these worthies were 'more honoured in the breach than in the observance;' but there must have been much curious folk-lore connected with them.

There is a book called *The Book of Christmas*, with illustrations by H. Seymour, published in 1836. At this time eating and drinking appears to have been the main way of keeping Christmas (by the way, we have all left out the flame round the plum-pudding, and its sprig of holly); the elder ladies in the pictures have large turbans, and the maid-servants low necks and ringlets. The streets appear to have been highly undesirable for G.F.S. girls. The turkeys came from Norfolk, *outside* the Norfolk coach; and boys came from school, shouting and rejoicing, with post-horses, and a black servant to escort them.

Religion is represented by a dilapidated country church, towards which a very scanty congregation is making its way among tombstones heaped with snow. One wonders if any of them got there.

Papers received from *Holly-Leaf*, *Laurel*, *S. J. Oldfield*, *Brown Linnet*.

WASSAILING.

At the present day, when the *wassail cup* lives only in the past, we find the term *wassail* applied to a custom, prevalent in some parts of the country on Christmas Day.

The custom consists in small children going from house to house with a box, or basket, in which we find generally *one* doll, laid in a bed of evergreens, and decorated with tinsel; but occasionally one comes across a box with two, or even three dolls in. These dolls are supposed to represent the Christ-Child, with Joseph and Mary, and the custom is evidently symbolic of the Babe born at Bethlehem, who came to all mankind on Christmas Day.

Upon being admitted the little 'wassailers' sing—

'Here we come a-wassailing
Among the leaves so green,
And here we come a-wandering
So fair as to be seen.
Love and joy come to you
And to you a wassail too,
And God bless you and send you
A happy New Year.

'We are not daily beggars,
Who beg from door to door,
But we are neighbours' children,
Whom you have seen before.
Love and joy (*repeat*).

'God bless the master of this house,
Likewise the mistress too,
And all the little children
That round the table go.
Love and joy,' etc.

The tune now changes, and the children sing—

'As I sat on a sunny bank,
A sunny bank,
As I sat on a sunny bank,
On Christmas Day in the morning,

'I saw three ships go sailing by,
Go sailing by,
I saw three ships go sailing by,
On Christmas Day in the morning.

'And who do you think was in those three ships?
In those three ships?
And who do you think was in those three ships?
But Joseph and his Fair Lady.

* * * * * *

'Oh, he did whistle and she did sing,
And all the bells in heaven did ring
For joy, because our Saviour was born
On Christmas Day in the morning.'

The tune again changes, and the ditty runs on, varying in different localities, finishing with—

'Now ladies, now gentlemen,
Whilst sat at your ease,
Put your hand in your pocket
And give what you please!'

This custom produces a very pretty sight. Children warmly clad, tripping over the crisp snow on Christmas afternoon, with the yellow winter sun shining brightly on their faces; and then to watch them standing half-shyly in the hall as they display their 'wassail-box' and prepare to sing. It is also pleasant to listen to the childish voices singing the old melodies—we know not how old—quaint traditional verses concerning the Holy Child and His mother; or, as in the last verse, reminding the listeners of the kindness that should specially show itself at Christmas-time. And, as a general rule, the little 'wassailers' do not go empty away.—LINDUM.

THE VESSEL CUP.

'Ah! little dream our listless eyes
What glorious presence they despise.'

KEBLE.

It must have been three years ago. I remember there was ice on the Humber, and skating on these flat Lincolnshire roads. In the midst of universal whiteness, my little girls, on our brown streak of gravel path, were scattering breakfast for the birds.

Another child gently opened the garden gate and slowly walked towards us. She was no daughter of mine. Slender, thin, and pale, she stood before me with downcast eyes. Her toes were almost bare. I think her feet had been bleeding. She drew from under her ragged jacket a small cardboard box, and opened it. There, on a layer of white cotton wool, lay a common little doll; a holly-leaf on each side of the head, a holly-leaf at the feet.

'Shall I dance?' said this strange child.

But mine cried, 'Oh, mother, not like that!' and ran for some outgrown old stockings and shoes.

She sat down on the door-step and silently put them on. Then, standing as before, 'Shall I dance now?' she asked again, looking at me with soft brown eyes in which tears were shining.

I shook my head. She disappeared.

'Who is she?' I said to our servant.

'I don't know,' she answered; 'but I expect she has come across from Hull. People say it's unlucky not to give them something, if it's but a halfpenny. They never come twice, and they always come alone. We shall never see her again. I don't know what may be the right name, but we all call it "The Vessel Cup."'—BARROW.

I placed a small table by my bed, and on it a red taper, and at the last minute before getting into my little bed (enveloped in curtains in a way I should not now consider at all hygienic), still more solemnly lighted it. And how I used to try and keep awake to see it burn itself out. I do not know how this custom originated, or exactly what I expected to see by its light. Not St. Nicholas, for I knew he never came till I was asleep, nor did I imagine he required a candle to show him where the stocking was. As for the taper, I fancy I imagined it to be partly Popish, and therefore calculated to annoy the Vicar, and partly Pagan, and so likely to attract gnomes and pixies, and other nice little people, who are always active at Christmas-time. Advancing years at last obliged me to give up (sorrowfully) the stocking; but still I burnt the taper, and gradually it became to me a purely Christian symbol of the Light which lighteth every man, and which for us men and for our salvation became Incarnate at Christmas.

I am a busy M.M. now, and know that I shall never fill a child's stocking on Christmas Eve. But year by year, as the Holy Night comes round, I light my scarlet taper and set it to burn before the Della Robbia, which hangs over my priedieu. I do not try to keep awake, for I am pretty tired by bedtime on Christmas Eve, and must be up at five for the first service; but still I burn my candle, partly in sweet sad memory of the days which are gone, partly in loving thankfulness for the many joys and mercies which, not on Christmas Day only, but 'new every morning,' still come to me from the 'land which is very far off.'—LAMBDA.

PRIZE WINNER FOR DECEMBER.

Miss Alice A. Milner, The Vicarage, Gomersall, Leeds.

SUBJECT FOR FEBRUARY.

Six quotations in prose or poetry about sea-birds.

SECOND SHELF.

PROSE COMPOSITION FOR DECEMBER.

The London Express.

This has produced few, but lively papers. *Lag-last's* is very good. It might, however, involve us in an action for libel against the G.N.R.! Chelsea China selects *Norna's*, which gives well the rush of the great creature through space.

THE LONDON EXPRESS.

Rushing on through the night, the London Express bears us swiftly southward, down through the lowland country. It darts past sleeping villages, through wayside stations with quaint pastoral names, over bleak tracts of moorland; or, with a defiant shriek echoing into the darkness, it burrows through one of the rounded hills which keep watch and ward over the border.

At this Christmas season the Express carries many passengers. To some among them, for whom welcome and holiday are in store, the monotonous rhythm of its swift onward progress weaves itself into a joyous refrain. But to others, going to face a nameless fear or a certain sorrow, that same rhythm after a time becomes acute suffering. They gaze with unseeing eyes out into the darkness, and to their strained ears the night seems full of mysterious wailing sounds, in which by day there would be no mystery at all.

A sharp curve, a gradual slackening of pace, lights flickering on either side, and the train draws breath at Carlisle. We have a vision of a wide, chilly platform, a few hurrying officials, more muffled-up travellers, and a moon-faced clock which ruthlessly points to the smallest of the small hours. Five disturbed minutes, and our impatient engine sends a reminding jerk through every link in his wake, and we glide out into the night again, up the steep inclines of the Cumberland fells, along the Westmoreland dales, where, could we but see them, each hillside is clamorous with foaming becks, down, down, through the brave north country towards the level, busy Midlands. Here the lights of towns and villages gleam out in quick succession, and we halt ever and anon in gas-lit stations, where new fellow-passengers await us, and heavy mail-bags are added to our load.

On again, now passing a group of lurid foundry fires, which reveal for an instant the dark figures of some toilers of the night; now rushing through a deep cutting, where the wind roars angrily; and now crossing a hollow-sounding bridge.

Suddenly, we notice a faint grey glimmer far to eastward. Looking again, the darkness seems to melt imperceptibly at the horizon, although no sun is visible. 'Slow, how slowly' the dawn strengthens, widens, conquers the outposts of the night. This December daybreak is no rosy-fingered aurora, the new-born day shivers into life through barriers of cloud, and mists lie thick on the wintry fields.

With a start, we discover that our journey is nearing its end. We are threading a maze of iron rails, bricks and mortar meet our eyes on every side, our last halting-place is passed. We speed through the pathetically ugly outskirts of the great city, miles of wet roofs and forests of chimneys vanishing into smoky distance. Another plunge into darkness, and we have reached our goal. The London Express runs smoothly into the crowded terminus, and amid its noise and bustle the business of life begins again for each of us.—NORNA.

THE LONDON EXPRESS.

Hendra's Story.

One dark evening last August I was waiting to signal the 9.30 train that picked up passengers from the London Express at St. Erth, when there was a knock at the door, and to my surprise there stood Master Hugh with his sister in his arms. Master Hugh and I were great friends; he often climbed the steep step into my box. He was a clever lad, and if he had been stronger could have worked the points as well as myself.

'Excuse me bringing Evy with me, Hendra,' he said; 'but nurse has gone out junketing, and I found Evy crying all alone in the dark. She is awfully home-sick, and always wanting to go back to London, so I thought it would cheer her to hear the Express.'

It was neither the time nor place for a little maid; but what could I do? Master Hugh declared he could not climb up the rocky path with her unless I lighted them home with my lantern; and I dared not leave until the train had passed.

So I put a box against the wall for her to sit on, and she thanked me prettily. She was a wan child, and reminded me of the snowdrops that grow on Trelyon Downs in the spring. She had large eyes, with dark marks

underneath; when she spoke her face had a kind of clear shining in it. Her hair was done up in funny little pigtails, and her brother had tied all her clothes on over her nightgown with a big sash. Her feet were bare except for shoes.

The heat of the lamps soon made her eyes shine and her cheeks flush pink. She forgot her troubles, and laughed when Master Hugh put his ear to the telephone, and told her what the station-master was saying six miles off.

But the train was late, and she grew weary and said, 'I do want to see the London 'Press!'

'Hear it!' corrected her brother. 'This is only a single line from the main line; but you can hear it, Evy, because this thing ticks when it passes St. Erth.'

She was too young to understand, and began to sob, 'Please, Mr. Hendra, make the London 'Press come.'

When the Express had gone on its way to Penzance, Master Hugh lifted his sister in his arms and showed her the two bright lights of the other train coming nearer and nearer as it curved round the cliff.

I was too busy to pay any attention to them then; but as I left the signal-box to receive the staff from the engine-driver, I heard Master Hugh say, 'You must sit down, Eve, or Hendra might get into trouble if they saw a girl in the box.'

After that I was able to take them home. I carried the little maid wrapped in my coat, because her clothes kept dropping off. But at the top of the cliff, close to their lodgings, Master Hugh said, 'I will take Evy now; nurse may be rather angry.'

Then the little thing put two soft arms round my neck and kissed me, saying, 'I do love you, Mr. Hendra, for showing me the London 'Press.'

It made me feel queer somehow, and more than ever I grieved that the only maid I ever took a fancy to would not have me, but married some one else.—WINIFRED SPURLING.

CLASS LIST FOR DECEMBER.

CLASS I.

Lag-last, Brown Linnet, Miranda, Winifred Spurling, Lindum, Thames Valley.

CLASS II.

Scotland Yard.

PRIZE WINNER FOR DECEMBER.

Miss Macfie, Gerhallow, Dunoon, N.B.

STUDY OF A CHARACTER FOR FEBRUARY.

A Mountain.

WHO, WHEN, AND WHERE?

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR DECEMBER.

1. Who was so fair that she made her pearls look dusky?
2. What was kept in Cluny's cage?
3. Who were (1) Plugson of Undershott, (2) Colombe of Ravesteyn, (3) Annabel Lee?
4. Who said that 'when she was born a star danced'?
5. Where are these lines?—

> 'The autumn is old,
> The sere leaves are flying;
> He gathered up gold,
> And now he is dying;
> Old age begins sighing.'

6. Who said this?—'Every matter hath two handles—by the one it may be carried; by the other, not. If thy brother do thee wrong, take not this thing by the handle, *He wrongs me;* for that is the handle whereby it may not be carried. But take it rather by the handle, *He is my brother, nourished with me;* and thou wilt take it by a handle whereby it may be carried.'

ANSWERS TO DECEMBER QUESTIONS.

(*From various authors*).

1. Edith, the Maid of Lorn.

> 'Those strings of pearl fair Bertha wound
> That, bleached Lochryan's depths within,
> Seem'd dusky still on Edith's skin.'
> (W. SCOTT, 'The Lord of the Isles,' i. 5.)

2. Venison, brandy, a lemon, also 'an old thumbed, greasy pack of cards.' (R. L. STEVENSON, 'Kidnapped,' ch. 23.)

3. (1) 'Plugson of Undershott' is a name given by CARLYLE to a typical commercial man. 'The indomitable Plugson, of the respected firm of Plugson, Hunks and Co., in St. Dolly, Undershott.' ('Past and Present,' bk. iii. ch. 10.)

(2) The heroine of BROWNING'S play, 'Colombe's Birthday.' She was Duchess of Juliers and Cleves.

(3) A beautiful maiden who lived 'in a kingdom of the sea.' (EDGAR ALLAN POE'S poem of the same name.)

4. Beatrice in SHAKESPEARE'S 'Much Ado about Nothing,' act ii. sc. 1.

5. In the first verse of a poem called 'Autumn,' by THOMAS HOOD.

6. Epictetus. The quotation may be found in several places. In 'The Teaching of Epictetus,' bk. v., translated F. W. Rolleston (Camelot Series). Also in MATTHEW ARNOLD'S 'Essays on Criticism,' and FARRAR'S 'Seekers after God.'

Answer 2. Prince Charles Edward was concealed for a time in Cluny's Cage. (See SCOTT'S 'Tales of a Grandfather.') Those who have given this answer are credited with marks.

Answer 3. (1) As 'Plugson of Undershott's' name was misprinted, he will not be allowed to effect the competition.

CORRECT ANSWERS RECEIVED.

Eleanor, 36; *Athena, Dianora, Melton Mowbray*, 30; *Cymraes, Winifrea Adey, Winifred Spurling*, 28; *E. T., Irnham, Mesech, Syndicate, The*

Bratchet, 22; *Aspley Guise*, 21; *White Cat, Workman*, 20; *Isabel*, 18; *A. C. R., Lenore, Sophonisba*, 16; *Honeylands, R. V. H.*, 14; Εγκρατεια, 8.

Double-Dummy's answers were posted too late.

Fourteen Streams is credited with 36 marks for November.

Melton Mowbray. Please send the exact quotation (from A. L. Gordon) for answer 1. If they really fit, you shall be credited, though they are from a very out-of-the-way source, as compared to Scott! You lost marks last time by giving no reference to answer 2, but as the poem bears the same name as the hero, two marks shall be restored.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR FEBRUARY.

(*All about one Poet*).

1. 'For a critic to say anything of *him* that has not been said already is as hard as it would be for a poet to sing a new song about the sun. But we vivify our old impressions by rearranging them; each reflects the light, flinging a gleam or a sparkle on its neighbour.' What critic wrote thus?

2. 'Kings for such a tomb, would wish to die.' What tomb?

3. Who said this?—

> 'All pains the immortal spirit must endure,
> All weakness which impairs, all griefs which bow,
> Find their sole speech in that victorious brow.'

4. In what does Carlyle say that our poet's greatness comes out most decisively?

5.

> 'Soul of the age!
> The applause, delight, the wonder of our stage.
> * * * * * *
> He was not of an age, but for all time.'

Who wrote these lines to his memory?

6. Give the quotation (in poetry or prose) which you consider the best expression in a few words of the genius of our poet.

Answers to the SEARCH QUESTIONS are in future to be sent NOT to the office, but to *Miss Pridham, Westmoreland Lodge, Wimbledon Park, Wimbledon.* All other competitions to Chelsea China as usual.

THIRD SHELF.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

QUERIES.

Wanted.—A list of Miss Yonge's novels in a chronological order as regards the events described, in which the same characters appear, or their descendants are introduced.—*A Middle-aged Maid.*

Quotation wanted.—

> 'You still are young, and o'er your face
> (Howe'er its features may be shaded),
> You throw the sunshine of your grace,
> And keep the immortal part unfaded.'

Alice Horton.

DEAR CHELSEA CHINA,—Is it permitted to all readers of the 'Monthly Packet' to avail themselves of your Notes and Queries? If so, will you kindly allow me to make use of it to say how grateful I shall be if any one will either send me a copy of Roscoe's 'Butterfly's Ball and Grasshopper's Feast,' or else (if too long to be written out) lend me a book containing the poem. In the latter case I will gladly pay postage, and will take great care of the book.—I am, yours sincerely, M. C. SMITH, Marton, Rugby.

ANSWERS.

Several correspondents have offered to send *Norna* 'The Knight of Intercession,' but this has now been kindly supplied to her.

In answer to several inquiries, 'Waynflete,' by C. R. Coleridge, is to be had from Messrs. A. D. Innes, in two vols.—CHELSEA CHINA.

I enclose the lines for which *Fortunatus* asks. I have never seen them attributed to Fanny Kemble. I copied them some years ago out of a book in which they were quoted, and they were there given as being written by Mrs. Butler; but is not the authorship rather doubtful? Is *Fortunatus* sure the lines are addressed to students? They sound to me as if they were addressed to Confirmation candidates.—E. F. C. ROGERS.

'Life is before you! from the fated road
Ye cannot turn; then take ye up the load.
Not yours to tread or leave the unknown way;
Ye *must* go o'er it, meet ye what ye may.
What though the brightness wane, the pleasures fade,
The glory dim? Oh, not of these is made
The awful life that to your trust is given!
Children of God! inheritors of heaven!
Mourn not the perishing of each fair toy;
Ye were ordained *to do*, and not to enjoy;
Fail not for sorrow, falter not for sin,
But onwards, upwards, till the goal ye win!
God guard you! and God guide you on your way,
Young warrior pilgrims, who set forth to-day!'

Fortunatus.—'Shakespeare, his Mind and Act,' Professor Dowden. 'Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist,' Professor Moulton. The prefaces to Cassell's third edition of Shakespeare's Plays. 'Seers and Singers,' Arthur D. Innes (A. D. Innes & Co.).

Fanny Kemble married Mr. Butler.—CHELSEA CHINA.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DEAR CHELSEA CHINA,—Is it not a mistake in the Christmas Number of 'Monthly Packet,' in 'Jenny Malory's Jubilee Sight,' to call the Queen's state horses 'Arabs'? Sir Walter Gilbey on 'Carriage Horses,' in the 'Live Stock Journal Almanac' for this year, says, 'It is a matter of common knowledge that the cream-coloured or pale dun horses used in Her Majesty's carriage on state occasions are *Hanoverian*, or of *Hanoverian* descent.'

Mrs. Fenwick Miller, in the *Illustrated London News*, January 1st, 1898, writes: 'Herr Wulff has bought a team of eight magnificent *Hanoverian* cream-coloured horses, identical in every way with those which draw the carriage of the Queen on state occasions.'—Yours truly, E. H.

DEAR CHELSEA CHINA,—It has always struck me how very much Charles I. of England and Louis XVI. of France were alike in their behaviour in prison, and in their sad death scenes; and in an American magazine I have lately read, I found it said that Louis XVI. spent much of

his time in prison reading a life of our King Charles I., so perhaps 'the White King's' example helped the French Monarch to keep up his courage, and go to his death like a *man*. *Bluebell* is hard on Charles I. He may have been a weak friend—though he bitterly repented—and a bad king, but he was a good husband and father. One can never judge in such matters 'by results'—this is most unfair. The heroic behaviour of Mary Queen of Scots at her execution may have inspired poor Marie Antoinette to die as she did; and the dignity of these two queens in their sufferings is so much alike, that I cannot help thinking the 'example better than precept' did help much.—Yours faithfully, THE MUFFIN MAN.

May I bring before your readers the great needs of a Convalescent Hospital, which is one of our very best; and which, from its situation, splendid air, and the tender care given to the patients, is capable of becoming the finest and most health-restoring in England? It is about two miles from the village of Ascot, on heath-land, amid pine-woods, in grounds of about forty acres in extent; the possession of which, together with the wonderfully invigorating air and healthy soil, give very unusual advantages to the hospital.

It is under the care of Sisters, the first established, in 1845, in England, and I know how admirable their work is. Several of them gave large fortunes to the buildings; but, as many of these have of late years been called to their rest, funds for carrying on the work are urgently needed, and also for the maintenance of a most charming orphanage for twenty-four little girls in the same grounds.

There are many Convalescent Homes, but there is not nearly room enough for the many poor patients in dire necessity of good air and plentiful nourishment after illness, which may enable them to take up again the battle of life, and which they cannot have in their own homes. Few greater charities can be done than by helping them; but this cannot be without funds, both for the support of existing beds, and providing more for ever-increasing applicants.

The Editor of *The Churchwoman*, 157, Strand, has kindly promised to receive subscriptions, and to acknowledge them in his columns. Perhaps those who cannot give money would help in other ways. Clothing, old and new, is most acceptable; knitted stockings and socks for the orphans; presents of fruit or preserves.

Everything is made the best use of by the Sisters' careful management, and will be gratefully acknowledged by them if addressed to THE MOTHER SUPERIOR, Ascot Priory, Bracknell, Berks.

SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.

SOUTH AFRICA.

QUESTIONS FOR FEBRUARY.

5. What constitutes a vocation for Foreign Missionary work, and how may such a vocation be helped or hindered?

6. Give the succession of Bishops in Graham's Town (Eastern Division of Cape Colony), with a few lines on their work.

7. 'Sir George Grey's plans for dealing with the native tribes were received by the Colonists with one shout of acclamation.' What were those plans, and what has been their measure of success?

8. What has been the importance of St. Helena as a separate see and centre of mission work? Give some account of the work in that island, or in Tristan d'Acunha.

Books recommended :—*Classified Digest of S.P.G.; Under His Banner;*

Lives of Bishop Gray and Bishop Armstrong; *Historical Sketches*—'Graham's Town and Natal,' 'St. Helena and Tristan d'Acunha' (S.P.G.), 1*d.* each; *The First Century of the Colonial Episcopate* (S.P.G), 3*d.*

Answers to be sent to Bog-oak, Industrial School, Andover, by March 1st.

Subscriptions for 1898 received from *Eumenes*, *Elingar*, *Honeysuckle*, *Maiden Aunt*, *Miss Wauchope*, *Miss C. Wauchope.*

ENGLISH HISTORY COMPETITION.

SEARCH QUESTIONS.

CLASS LIST FOR DECEMBER.

CLASS I.

Gem, 37; *Thames Valley*, 35; *Oka*, 34; *Green Mantle*, 33; *Double Dummy*, 32.

CLASS II.

Maiden Aunt, 21.

GENERAL REMARKS.

1. The Lancastrian claim was based on Parliamentary right sanctioned by three generations. The Yorkist claim was an hereditary one, complicated by the fact that it was transmitted through a female.

2. The fifteenth century witnessed the 'constitutional experiment' of the Lancastrians, but ended in the autocratic rule of the Tudors. The social result of the French wars and the general progress of civilisation should also have been mentioned.

3 and 4 were well answered as a rule.

Maiden Aunt spoils her work by using second-rate histories. She should get Gardiner's 'Student's History of England and Historical Atlas,' and for fuller details 'Epochs on the Period.'

PRIZE WINNER FOR 1897.

Miss E. N. Graham, Vernon House, Weybridge.

The entries during the past year having been so few, it is not considered worth while to continue the English History Competition through 1898; at any rate, *for the first* half of the year. Since writing this statement Chelsea China has received six new applications. Hope may therefore be entertained for July.

The story called 'Nora Kilnorth' in the Christmas Number should have been called 'A Precious Cartload. By Nora Kilnorth.'

'MONTHLY PACKET' NOTICES.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The readers of the 'Monthly Packet' are invited to address CHELSEA CHINA on any subject the discussion of which occurs to them as likely to interest others, especially in connection with articles appearing in the Magazine.

CHINA CUPBOARD PRIZES—

A. *Variety Specimens.* Prize, monthly, 5*s.*

Search Questions (*Who, When, and Where*). Prize, for six months taken together, £1 1*s.*

Prose Competition. Monthly Prize, 5*s.*, or 10*s.*, according to merit.

RULES for the above—

(1) Papers must be sent by the 25th of each month, addressed to CHELSEA CHINA, care of Messrs. A. D. Innes & Co.; they must NOT be addressed to 'the Editors.' (2) Each envelope must be marked *outside* with the subject to which it refers. Papers under separate competitions or discussions must be in separate envelopes. (3) The correspondent's name and address must be written on every paper: the use of a *nom de plume* for the lists is optional. (4) If competitors fail to comply with any rule, their papers will be disqualified. (5) The real name of the prize-winner is published in each case. (6) There are no entrance fees. (7) Prizes cannot be taken by the same person twice in a half-year.

B. *English History Competition.* Prize, for six months taken together, £3 3*s.* Farther prizes only if the Editors are satisfied with the keenness of the competition.

RULES.—(1) Answers must be sent by the 25th of each month, addressed to CHELSEA CHINA, care of Messrs. A. D. Innes & Co. (2), (3), (4), (5) and (6) as above, under section A. Be very careful to put 'English History' *outside.*

C. *Church History Society.* Prizes of books are given. In value and number, these depend on the number of entries. They are given for the year's work, but Competitors who have only taken six months *may* have a prize awarded.

RULES.—I. This Society is open to all readers of the Magazine, by payment of an annual FEE of 1*s.* II. Questions are set each month.

No China Cupboard papers can be returned.

PROVERB COMPETITION, 1898.

It appears to us that a set subject fails to attract authors of experience, or to elicit their best work. We therefore cordially invite stories for next year's Christmas Number to be sent in without limit of subject, to be chosen according to merit and paid for in the usual manner. The PROVERB COMPETITION is limited to authors under 25.

All stories not to exceed 10,000 words, to be sent in between June 1st and July 1st, 1898. Proverb stories to be headed PROVERB COMPETITION, CHRISTMAS NUMBER, outside the wrapper, other stories CHRISTMAS NUMBER only. Stamped cover or stamps to be enclosed for return.

Illustrate this quotation in a story—

> 'Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
> The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
> Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
> And, by opposing, end them.'

[*The Editors of the 'Monthly Packet' will feel obliged if All Contributors will write their names and addresses clearly on their MSS., and will enclose stamps for return. Unless these conditions are complied with, the Editors cannot undertake to preserve, return, or enter into correspondence about MSS. Much trouble is saved if accompanying letters are enclosed in the parcel instead of being sent separately.*

The utmost care is taken in returning MSS., but the Editors can only hold themselves absolutely responsible for such as are sent to them at their own request.]

THE MONTHLY PACKET.
NEW SERIES.

MARCH, 1898.

THE GOSPEL WRIT IN STEEL.

BY ARTHUR PATERSON, AUTHOR OF 'FATHER AND SON,' 'FOR FREEDOM'S SAKE,' ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

BULL RUN.

THE summer had come, and now at last the armies of the North and South, which for three months had been drilling and drilling, marching a little, fighting hardly at all, and boasting a great deal, were to meet in their full strength and fight the first great battle of the war. There had been isolated engagements which, as usual, the Press on either side had tried to magnify—when their friends gained the advantage—into famous victories; but nothing had happened as yet to test the merits of the combatants as a whole. On the Union side there were whole regiments which had never fired a gun, and except for small contingents of regular troops—most of which were recruits—not a man had been really trained in musketry practice. Not a doubt, however, existed from one end of the North to the other, as to the certainty of a great victory when the enemy were met at last. The ordinary evolutions of drill had been well ground into the recruits during these three months of preparation; their equipment had been perfected. When the soldiers destined for the first advance southward, thirty-four thousand strong, defiled before the President at Washington on the 15th day of July, well armed, well clothed, full of military ardour, their bearing erect, their faces already tanned by exposure in camp, it was no wonder that the folk throughout

the North, ignorant of the meaning of war, led by editors and newspaper correspondents as ignorant as themselves, should believe that these men could conquer a continent, and march without check to Richmond, the Confederate capital. Many went so far as to count the days when Jefferson Davis, as arch-enemy to the Union cause, would be brought to Washington to be tried for high treason.

In well-informed circles the rumour went that General McDowell, the commander-in-chief, had protested against an advance being made so soon, giving as his reasons the inexperience of the regimental officers, and the want of any real discipline outside the drill-ground among the men, and that he had declared his army to be only fit for defensive operations. No one in the North, except a few military experts gave credence to such reports. 'On to Richmond!' was the universal cry, and on the army went, blindly and exultantly, accompanied by a great number of civilians and even by ladies, anxious to witness the triumphs of the champions of the Union cause.

On the 16th day of July the march began from Washington to the base of operations, Centreville, a town twenty miles south. The Confederate forces were in position five miles further on, on the banks of Bull Run Creek. This march to Centreville will never be forgotten until the memory of Bull Run has faded from the minds of American men. For six miles the troops marched steadily; then, alas! the point of the unkind remarks upon their discipline became painfully apparent. In nine regiments out of ten the men did exactly as they pleased. The day was hot, the dust ankle-deep, the rifles became heavier than bars of solid iron, and the knapsacks weighed upon the unaccustomed backs which bore them as if their contents had been turned into lead. Nor, when the nature of these contents is considered, was this very wonderful. Seth's kit was a good example of the rest: a pair of trousers, a pair of thick boots, four pairs of stockings, four flannel shirts, a blouse, a Bible, a volume of Shakespeare, and writing and shaving materials. In addition to these necessaries there were, rolled upon the knapsack, a double woollen blanket and a waterproof. Under such burdens the stamina of the volunteers melted like butter in the sun. One by one at first, soon by scores and by hundreds, they fell out of the ranks and sat down under trees to rest and smoke; when they passed a stream they stopped to

drink, or they loitered by the hedges, which were full of blackberries, and paused to pick and eat. The 2nd Wisconsin, brigaded with the 69th and 79th New York Regiments, under command of Colonel W. T. Sherman, became completely mixed up, and but for a fine diversity of uniforms which prevailed in both armies at the beginning of the war, might have been a long time disentangling themselves. As for Seth and his comrades of No. 9 company, to their credit be it said, they neither picked blackberries nor kicked their heels on fences, but, with an occasional rest, marched steadily through. Their captain was shrewd, active, and popular, and by a constant fire of sarcastic pleasantry at the expense of laggards, kept his men together, and brought them into Centreville on the second day, July 18th, footsore and very weary. At Centreville they heard the first boom of cannon, and the men thought a great battle had begun. They ate a hasty meal, and then many began stealthily writing letters of farewell to loved ones at home, or sat about in groups talking nervously. Seth was on sentry duty. As he paced to and fro, his eyes scanning the fields and hillocks and scattered trees to the south, his ears painfully alive to the dull roar of artillery and the sharp crackle of musketry, he thought of Jean, and contrasted the present with the past. He was still very tired, his spirits were depressed, and a conversation he had overheard a few minutes before between his captain and Major Simpson had not tended to reassure him.

'We shall not be ready to begin until the troops come up,' the captain had said. 'That will not be to-day.'

'Do you think they'll ever get here? I don't,' the major snarled in reply. The worthy man was in a very bad temper. 'If they do, don't you be under any impression that they will fight. I tell you the first time they see a drop of blood they'll run. I am sick of this affair. With a division of regulars I would whip those seceders into h—l. But I have no use for men like ours—blasted civilians in uniform, which they don't know how to wear!'

'The Rebs may be as bad,' the captain had rejoined.

'Not possible. Anyway they can't be worse, and they are on their own ground. I bet they know well what we are about. What do we know of their movements?'

Seth believed the major to be right, and felt very wretched. He had shared to the full the popular belief in the immediate

and decisive success of the Union arms. Now, reaction had come, and he foresaw nothing but disaster. A presentiment weighed upon him that he would lose control of his nerves, and at some critical moment run away. He saw himself before a court martial, sentenced to be shot for cowardice, and Jean coldly saying that it served him right. In the over-wrought state of his nerves all these ideas appeared prophetic, and his spirits fell lower and lower. But now a horseman approached at full gallop, and the morbid phantoms vanished.

'Who goes there?'

'Courier from General Tyler.'

The man rode to the rear. He was an orderly from the front. It was a call for reinforcements, and presently the brigade battery (Ayers') limbered up and passed Seth at a gallop. Then Colonel Sherman trotted by with his staff, and Seth marked well this hard-faced man with his bright eyes, and thought he looked resolute enough for anything. The sight refreshed him. Another orderly rode up, saluted the colonel, and presented a dirty bit of paper. Orders were given to advance the whole brigade.

Away with love-lorn sentimental broodings. In less time than Major Simpson, for one, would have believed possible, the men were in column, advancing at the double quick. There was no more sentry duty for Seth, no more doubts and fears. He was shoulder to shoulder with comrades now, marching to the front. No one knew what there was ahead. The wonderfully accurate information of the enemy's movements, and of the intentions of their own generals, that the rank and file of the armies gained later in the war, did not exist as yet. Every one expected a battle, and each braced himself to meet it in his own way. There was no talking now—mere volunteers and raw recruits these men might be, but they meant fighting.

They marched three miles, the roar of the guns steadily increasing until they reached the fields directly sloping to Bull Run Creek. The first visible signs of the battle now confronted them: a straggling crowd of soldiers were approaching, Union men, some limping and bloody, some without arms, running for their lives; others walking sullenly with bent heads, rifle at shoulder, all in full retreat.

'Halt!'

The march was over, and the 2nd Wisconsin, which was the advance column, formed into line of battle. Where were

the rebels? Every one expected to see them in pursuit, and watched with anxious eyes the thick belt of trees that bordered the creek, from which the firing came. But no men appeared. Nothing but puffs of smoke, and shot which tore up the ground in places to the feet of the regiment. It was sickening work for recruits, standing still to be shot at; there was no cover to protect them, and no order was given to charge. The men soon became mere bags of nerves, and muttered imprecations first on the army, then on their own commander. Here they had to remain for half an hour—the longest thirty minutes, most of them felt, they had ever passed in their lives. They were then marched back to their old camp, discouraged and very cross.

By degrees the news spread that General Tyler had made a reconnaissance, attempting to carry Blackburn's Ford over Bull Run, and had been repulsed by the enemy, who were posted there in considerable force.

'Blasted fool, Tyler!' was the comment of Silas Horrocks, Seth's sergeant, who had been through the Mexican War, to an admiring crowd of recruits round the camp fire. 'What did he do it for? We all reckoned the seceshers were there. The only thing we know now that wasn't known before is that those boys have darned long teeth. That ain't worth anybody's life but Tyler's own, which has been carefully preserved. He is like a pile more of our officers. The returns of killed and wounded we'll send in by-and-by through their mistakes will show that presently—mark my words now, you pretty volunteers!'

Two days and nights were spent in the camp at Centreville, both men and officers chafing at the delay—none more than their commander, McDowell, who knew that every hour that passed enabled the Confederates to bring up reinforcements. But it was inevitable, the result of the miserable *fiasco* of a march from Washington, and inexperienced staff officers innocent of any notion how to make effective reconnaissances of the enemy's position and strength.

At last, at one o'clock on the morning of the 21st, the sound of muffled drums broke the stillness of the camp, and Sherman's brigade arose with the rest, every man feeling in his very bones that the time had come. The air was raw and cold; the men were very sleepy and tired; they shivered and growled, and wished the enemy and the war, the Union cause and all, at the

bottom of the sea. By two o'clock the camp had faded into the distance behind them, and they were again marching on to the creek. No firing to be heard now. The brigade marched on unopposed, until it was halted on the banks of Bull Run, and deployed in line along an edging of timber which afforded the men welcome cover in case of an attack. A pause—a long, long pause. The daylight crept into the sky, and the sun rose; birds sang in the trees, the animal life of the neighbourhood began to bestir itself in the usual daily round of occupation, bewildered and curious, but not much afraid of these lines of blue and grey-coated men. Still there was no firing. This was harder on the nerves of the recruits than the night march. Vague haunting fears beset them; and the least disturbance, a chance shot, or cry, or loud noise, would have driven them into panic. Presently a movement was perceived across the creek. Men were marching there in column at a smart pace, moving away to the right away from the stream. It was a body of the enemy off to intercept the brigade which had marched before Sherman, showing that part of the Union army had succeeded in crossing Bull Run, and was making steady progress toward the heart of the Confederate position. The fears now became intense restlessness, but the men were comforted for a little while by watching their battery wheel into position to fire upon the enemy's column. The disappointment when it was discovered that the guns would not carry so far was very bitter, and the language in the brigade became outrageous. The sound of brisk musketry fire now began directly in front, quickly growing louder, and the news flew down the line that Hunter's brigade was driving the enemy before it like chaff. The swearing began again—this time at Hunter's brigade. It was hard to stand still and passive while others were marching to victory, and winning immortal fame at every step. Hunter's brigade was more unpopular than the enemy for the moment.

At last, just at noon, came the order the brigade waited for so long. They were to advance to Hunter's support. That enterprising man had gone too fast; had been met, as might have been expected, with a superior force, and was in distress. A ford was found by the quick eye of Sherman; over went a company in skirmishing order, then the New York 69th, then the 2nd Wisconsin. No hitch occurred, and order was given to advance slowly and firmly. There was no fear in the mind of any man now that the fighting would be over before

they could reach it. The rattling fire in front had become one continuous roar, very trying to unaccustomed ears, growing louder as more men came into action on both sides. No. 9 company marched at the head of the regiment, its spirits rising at every step. All hearts beat high with courage and excitement; old fatigues, disappointments, and fears were forgotten; they panted to be in the thick of the fight. They clambered up the steep banks, and marched at swinging pace over fields already strewn with dead men and wounded horses. This was a gruesome, sickening sight for recruits, but they had braced their nerves to meet it, and though their faces blanched at this first glimpse of war, and the smell of blood made many sick and faint, they set their teeth against the weakness, grasped their guns the tighter, and hurried grimly on.

'Form into line of battle!'

'Thank God,' the men whispered under their breath, then cheered to the echo when they found that the 2nd Wisconsin was to lead. No one knew how the battle stood. The ground had been rising for some time, and they were forming on a hill. In front of them was the dip of a valley, and then another hill, dark with masses of men. The desperate fighting was there; they could tell so much; and no victory for either side was to be recorded yet. It was said that the place they now occupied, 'Mathew's Hill,' had been in the possession of the enemy, and that the work before the Union army was to storm and take 'Henry Hill,' the ridge opposite, where stood the main body of the Confederates at bay. Henry Hill carried—the day was won. It was the key of the position. For hours before this time the fighting there—dashing assault and stubborn defence—had been growing fiercer as both sides brought up reinforcements from the rear; but there was no victory for either army yet. It was now the turn of Sherman's brigade.

'Second Wisconsin, advance!'

Down Mathew's Hill they went, met by a fierce artillery fire, and men fell right and left. The hearts of the West Point officers trembled with suspense—would the boys falter at their first baptism of death? Not they. Ill-disciplined as they were, all unused to pain and carnage, and their nerves severely tried with the long, anxious waiting, their blood was up. On they went, steadily, No. 9 company in the van. At Seth's right rode Major Simpson. As he saw the steady swing of the step of his men, and how coolly the gaps in the ranks

were filled, his stern face became almost paternal in its approval.

'Steady, you boys; steady we go. Don't lose your breath by rushing too soon. Hold to it quietly until we are within fifty yards, then drive those rebs to h—l!'

They held to it, and at the bottom of the hill at Young's Ford, struck a road deeply cut in the clay, in which for a space they were sheltered from the cruel shot. But it was only for a little while. Again the ground began to rise. They were at the foot of Henry Hill. The road ceased.

'Left wheel!'

Now their time had come. Around them the men of the regiment which had gone before lay dead in lines and heaps, and over the ground they had to pass to reach the foe, his guns were hurling sheets of deadly hail, to which all they had faced so far had been mere child's play. A shout, the flash of the officers' swords in the sun, a ringing cheer, and they charged. Seth, white with excitement and nearly breathless, found himself blindly following the grey horse on which the major sat. While that horse held its course, Seth would go on to the bottomless pit if need be. Whether men were beside him or not, he did not know. He forgot all about the company, the regiment, everything except the enemy's line away in front and the grey horse close at his side. All at once the animal reared, threw itself backwards, and fell dead. Seth stopped, dropped his musket, and tried to extricate the dying man. The major cursed him for his pains.

'Get out,' he yelled. 'You d——d coward, let me be!' Then collecting every remnant of strength left in him, he raised his voice to its highest pitch. 'Forward, boys; charge *now*, and the day is ours!'

Nerved by the cry, Seth caught up his musket, and was about to spring onward, when he was nearly knocked down by two men who were in retreat. He staggered, and dropped the rifle again, picked it up, and looked at the major. He was already dead, his face stiff, the eyes glazed and dull. A shudder passed through Seth, a cold dread paralysed his nerves, and he followed the men down the hill. It was only for a short distance, however. Other officers were here, cursing, commanding, beseeching their men to stay. Half a dozen near Seth rallied, all of No. 9 company, and Seth stepped in beside them. Their own captain was there to lead, and as they faced round and marched back,

others joined them with a cheer. Then the havoc of the guns began again. The men on either side of Seth were struck down. No one filled the gaps, for there was no sense of discipline now to hold the men together. One by one they faltered, and at last Seth, seeing a man in front struck in the body and roll on the ground shrieking in mortal agony, could endure it no more; again the dread seized him, and he turned with a cry and ran.

At the bottom of the hill, in the sheltered road, the officers managed to reform the broken ranks—but it was to retreat. The attack on Henry Hill had failed. The gallant defence of the confederates—more especially Jackson's brigade animated by their commander, to be known as 'Stonewall' from that day—and the timely arrival of reinforcements turned the scale in their favour. The Union army began to waver and break. Back with the rest went Sherman's brigade; sullenly, slowly, unwillingly. Back to the ford; across the creek; to Centreville once more; there to pause and eat and sleep. Their commander was prepared to renew the struggle on the morrow; but the men had no thought of fighting. Seth, with burning brain and shivering limbs, his left arm throbbing with pain from a bullet wound, sat before the camp fire, tortured by every ghastly scene of the day, living the futile charge of Henry Hill over again, hearing the shriek of the dying man and Major Simpson's curse; sick, miserable, and worn out in soul and body and mind.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE retreat of the Union army after the first battle of Bull Run has been described by many pens, from many points of view. It was a ghastly and nigh inevitable complement to the march from Washington. The men who had sat down by the wayside and gathered blackberries, when their fond ones at home pictured them pressing on with stern faces and high hearts to the destruction of the rebels, were not of the stuff—yet—to take defeat and the slaughter of their bravest calmly or even reasonably. A battle with raw troops, however good the material may be, is a matter of extremes. At first they fight bravely, and when well led will face even big guns for a time; but when they turn, when once their hearts fail them, they are lost. At Bull Run, when the bloody struggle for Henry Hill was over, though a few regiments here and there,

like Sherman's brigade, bore themselves like soldiers, and retreated slowly and in order, the rest left the field piecemeal—the men melting away in streams, pressing faster and faster upon one another's heels, until the retreat became the terrified rush of a herd of animals. By midnight, the whole army, instead of taking up its old position at Centreville, which it might safely have done, was rolling back to Washington, one inextricable mass of confused, demoralised men. Infantry, cavalry, artillery, were mixed up together, struggling and swearing, perspiring with terror at fears their own imagination conjured up, crying out that the enemy was pressing hard upon their rear and would cut off their retreat, while in reality not a confederate soldier was in pursuit, not an attempt was made that day to follow up the victory beyond Bull Run. All those weary miles the men never paused in their retreat, reaching Washington early next morning. Walt Whitman has described their entry there.

'The men appear—in disorderly mobs—some in squads; stragglers, companies, three-quarter queer looking objects; strange eyes and faces, drenched and fearfully worn; hungry, haggard, blistered in the feet. In the midst of the deep excitement many, very many of the soldiers are sleeping. They drop down anywhere, on the steps of houses, up close by the basement and fences; in the side walk; aside in some vacant lot, and deeply sleep. Some sleep in squads, some singly; and over them as they lie, sullenly drips the rain.'

One of these sleepers was Seth. When the army swept past Centreville Sherman's brigade was obliged to follow, and meeting others in the darkness at a cross-road, fell into some confusion, many of the men falling out of the ranks and losing themselves. Seth had done this. His wound had made him feverish and light-headed, and he had marched with the rest, hardly knowing what he was about. At the confusion of the cross-roads, the panic of other brigades had infected him, and he hurried blindly on, sometimes on the road, in the ditch, or in the open field, always with others, but with no one that he knew. When day came at last, when 'the sun rose but shone not,' he was tramping over Long Bridge cheek by jowl with men of half a dozen different regiments. Weariness oppressed him now, his limbs trembled, his head was heavy and his eyes half closed, yet the ghastly dread of an enemy in pursuit, drawing nearer every moment, still overpowered

everything else, and he staggered on until he came to the suburbs of Washington.

'They will defend the capital,' he muttered; 'I guess we're safe now—but I must find the boys or they'll call me a deserter.' He was firmly persuaded that his regiment was in front, and with feet swollen and bleeding, his legs racked with shooting pains, he stumbled doggedly on. At last nature would endure no more, and at the edge of the side walk of the first street he came to he sat down to rest a minute, presently sinking on his face and falling sound asleep.

When he awoke he found himself in bed, and for a moment thought he was in his old rooms at Chippewa. Then he saw that the place was filled with many beds, and as his head grew clearer that he was in hospital. He lay still for a long time wondering. His left arm was bandaged tightly—he could not move it, and when he lifted his right hand he found it absurdly weak. Afterwards he ascertained that a bullet had been extracted from the arm and that he had lain for days in high fever, and delirious. All he realised himself was the pain in his arm and a bitter thirst. Seth would have given anything for something to drink. He looked about for some one to bring him water; but except for other men, in bed, wounded like himself, he could see no one. He was presently roused from consideration of his own wants by a conversation that was taking place over his bed. It was begun by a man on his left, who was reading a newspaper, and had addressed a question to a youth with bandaged neck and shoulder.

'When is your time out, friend?'

'These four days. I am a three months' man.'

'So am I, thank the Lord!'

'I shall re-enlist, though.'

'You will not!'

The speaker, who was fat and middle-aged, with a coarse, shrewd face, spoke in a tone of most emphatic disgust. The other looked surprised, while Seth, who in common with most of the first volunteers had also joined for three months only, began to listen with interest.

'Don't you think there'll be work for us?' the lad said. 'We must whip those seceshers now we've made a start.'

'Whip 'em!' the fat man cried, with a fine scorn. 'Of course we'll whip 'em; and that without a battle, or only half a one. But this don't concern any of us who was wounded at Bull Run,

unless we had been fools enough to volunteer over ninety days. Now, sir-ree, listen to this.' He rustled his newspaper with a professional air to attract attention. At home he had been a political agitator. He had become a volunteer for what he could get out of it, and having extracted nothing but a broken leg, was now burning to avenge himself on the Government. 'There is but one sensible and proper course for self-respecting citizens, who went forth in their country's cause in April or May last, to pursue, and that is to get back home and stay there. It is reasonable; it is right; it is patriotic. You think not? Then'—raising his voice so that it could be heard all over the room—'I will proceed to demonstrate my case. What, friend, caused our defeat at Bull Run? I will tell you. Your officers. The West-pointers and their friends, puffed up to the eyes with all the pride an' ignorance of creation. I reckon, my gallant wounded heroes, that I can prove this to be an undeniable fact. Who, but for these bunglers and snobs, would have beaten the enemy to threads? The men! *You!* Ay, and all your dead brothers, lyin' now on the bloody swards of Henry Hill. What is to be done about it? Listen to me. First take these captains, an' colonels, and brigadier-generals—take them from the high places they abuse, and put in there men of the people, 'lected by the people. Next, let you and me and those who have suffered behave with proper dignity, and refuse to take a further share of this shooting business until the boys who stayed at home and who, you will see by the papers, are cursin' us to-day, have done their share. Let us tell them to go to the front, and see how they like it. We will take the work they leave behind 'em, and rest awhile. There is another way of looking at it. Do you'—glaring at the man he spoke to first of all—'want to keep all the glory to yourself? Ain't your wounds an honour that will keep you goin' a spell? Ain't you got folk who need you? I have. Don't charity begin at home? I tell you, friends all,' with a concluding flourish—the doctor had come in to begin his rounds, and it was time to stop—'that the course I recommend to you is one of Christian duty. I will be pleased to argify quietly with any one of you who don't see it so. I will guarantee to convince him even that he is wrong and I am right. Let folk like newspaper editors, and other trash that have never left their home, blow the loud trumpets. For you and me, sense and duty to those we love the best require that we should do what I have said.'

The eloquence of the man—Galibrag by name—was not without effect. Hospital life all the world over is dull and monotonous; a new interest, especially of a personal kind, is welcome, be what it may. Nearly all were 'three months' men, and though many did not agree with Mr. Galibrag at first, they found him a difficult person to argue with, as all men are who can shift their ground according to the point of view of their opponent, and know how to touch him in his weakest place, like a skilful boxer in the ring. He was more dangerous in conversation than on the stump, and, as fate would have it, his bed was next to Seth's. Mr. Galibrag took a fancy to Seth, or said he did, and when Seth, after he had gained strength, took up the cudgels on the other side, Mr. Galibrag met him in the most cordial spirit.

'Mind you, now, friend,' he said loftily. 'I would not influence a man against his inclination—no, not for the world. If you feel that the Government and your officers acted right towards you; if drilling, and hard food and catching chills, and bein' marched round like a dancin' bear to the tune of the sergeant's tongue, suits your constitution, I would say nothing. It is a matter of taste and of men. But I reckon a man of education—more 'specially a man who can educate others—a are gift, sir, a most rare gift—must have peculiar ideas of usefulness if, rather than be independent and serve his country in a dignified way as a free citizen, he prefers to be what some call a soldier and I call a slave. But how does it come to you? Let us discuss your own particler case.'

This Seth declined to do brusquely, apologised for his rudeness, and finally was led to talk a great deal about himself. The prejudice he first conceived against Mr. Galibrag moderated, as he became used to the man's manner, and as Mr. Galibrag became better acquainted with him. Seth was sick in mind as well as body. His nerves had never recovered tone, though he was considered convalescent. Any unexpected noise would make him start violently, and he felt a childish dread of discomfort and bodily pain. Most of all, he suffered from home sickness, and ached for a sight of Jean. They had exchanged letters since Bull Run, hers full of affectionate solicitude and warm praise of his gallantry, for some one, it appeared, now at Chippewa, had seen him charge up Henry Hill. He longed to be with her. He had won his spurs. At least he might rest awhile and enjoy his reward. Mr. Galibrag's arguments

disposed him to go even further, and he began to conjure up a vision of re-organisation of the school, marriage, and, what he had craved for all his life, a home of his own. On the other hand, Mr. Galibrag's own personality was objectionable, and when he departed, the atmosphere of the hospital seemed purer and cleaner. A few days later Seth took his discharge, and began the long journey to Chippewa. He left against the advice of the doctor, who warned him that over-exertion might cause inflammation of the wounded arm not yet healed. But Seth could not stand the confinement and depressing surroundings any longer. He believed that active change of scene and thought was all he needed, and took the risk without hesitation. When he reached the railway depôt, he felt so exhausted and miserable he would have turned back; but pride forbade it. So he took his ticket, and as the train carried him northwards he smiled a contented smile, and jolted on uncomplainingly in the dusty third-class car, his faded uniform hanging in clumsy folds over his lean limbs, his arm still in a sling, and a beard of five weeks' growth adding to the cadaverousness of his hollow cheeks. It was a terrible journey. The weather was hot and close; the cars were ill ventilated, with hard, bare, wood seats, and populated by peculiarly vicious and bloodthirsty mosquitoes. Sleep at night was out of the question, there was no rest by day, and the food Seth allowed himself out of his very slender resources was coarse and badly cooked. It was not to be wondered at, therefore, if his mind dwelt upon what he should have left alone—his sufferings at Bull Run; if fresh fever in his blood began to germinate. The last night he was so much exhausted that he dosed fitfully in spite of his aching limbs, but it was to dream of the horrors over again. Seth was thankful when daylight came; and to employ the few hours that remained before he reached Marathon Junction, where he had to change for Chippewa, he took pencil and paper and scribbled a letter to Jean. He had made up his mind definitely not to return to the war, and he felt that he could put his reasons better on paper than he could give them in speech. He would, he thought, break the ice when they were together, and then leave her the letter to read. The writing down of his thoughts and feelings did him good. He got a morning nap, and woke, somewhat refreshed, just before the train rolled into Marathon. But here the greatest trial of all awaited him. The train was two hours behind time, the

Chippewa train for the day had gone, and he must remain at Marathon four-and-twenty hours. It was a climax to all he had endured. A whole day and night to pass before he could see Jean! He cursed until he was weak. What was to be done? He could not afford to stay at the hotel. The total amount of his resources when he left Washington, except for one hundred dollars in the bank at Chippewa, had been thirty dollars for three months' service in the army. Of this sum he had five dollars left; and there was still the railway fare from Marathon to pay. The result of this discovery was a resolve to get two meals at the hotel, one this afternoon, and one to-morrow, and spend the night at the depôt, on a bench. The hotel was some way from the railroad, at the top of a long hill, and by the time Seth reached it, he was feeling very ill. He stumbled into the dining-room, ordered two dough nuts and a cup of coffee, and then, utterly worn out, closed his eyes and began to wonder with considerable disgust whether he were going to faint. Some one came up and stood over him. Seth opened his eyes languidly, thinking it was the waiter. It was John Burletson.

'Why, John, old friend!' and they shook hands warmly.

'I thought it could be no one else,' John said. 'But, Seth, you are sick. I hardly knew you.'

'I am whittled down a little,' Seth replied, in a voice he strove to make cool and indifferent. 'The weather is infernal, and this thing,' touching his wounded arm, 'is inclined to play it rather low-down on me. It ought to be well by now.'

John sat down and looked at him.

'You are bound for Chippewa?'

'I thought so, but these beastly cars went back on me. I will arrive there to-morrow—all that the mosquitoes at the depôt chose to leave. What a cursed noise folk make in these places. The voices of those girls go through me. How much, waiter?'

A negro placed his repast before him, which John looked at disapprovingly.

'Twenty-five cents, sar—cap'n, I mean.'

'I will give you ten,' Seth cried irritably; 'twenty-five be hanged!'

'Dough-nuts, ten, sar; coffee, fifteen. Ask de boss, please.'

'Take away the coffee, then,' Seth said grimly, 'and bring me a glass of water.'

The waiter obeyed, with a contemptuous shrug. John left his chair.

'Excuse me, friend, one minute,' he said. 'I have forgotten something.'

When he returned he found Seth at the window.

'Let us go out of this, John. Do you mind? I feel stifled here. It has come to me while you were absent that I would like to tell you something. Have you time to spare?'

Seth spoke in an excited, feverish tone, and John noticed that his face was flushed and twitching all over.

'I would like nothing better. But I know a place better than the street.'

'Are you staying here?'

'I have a private room engaged.'

He led Seth into the hall and up a flight of stairs, and took him into a comfortably furnished apartment with a carpet, rocking-chair, and a bed with mosquito curtains.

'Comfort—by George!' Seth sighed, sinking into the chair, while John shut the door and placed himself astride of a stool. 'I have not seen such a place as this since—since I saw you last.'

'How long have you been out of hospital?'

'Three days—I have come straight from there.'

'Were you stout enough for the journey?'

'I guess so. Anyway, I had been there long enough. Why?'

'You are so—thin.'

'That is nothing at all. Now, tell me, how are the folk? I seem to have been away years. Has any one got the school?'

'They have a man for the time.'

'Not permanently? Good business. See—I am going to tell you what is in my mind. I don't intend going back to the war. I am near played out. Anyway, I feel I have done enough for the country. I am going to play for myself. You were a wise man, old John; by thunder, you were indeed. War is pretty to read about; but, the reality is a devilish business—simply devilish. You find me changed! But for my uniform, I bet you would not have known me. Well, my idea is to get back to the school, work like ten men, and get married. I don't know what Jean will say about it. I have written to her in case of accidents, for I have felt, to tell the truth, so wretchedly mean and poorly, that I got an idea into my head I might not get so far as Chippewa for a while. But stop. What is in your mind? Something rather ugly, I can see.

Do you think I am in the wrong track to talk of staying at home? I am not. But tell me, what do you think? Tell me straight.'

John bent his head.

'I was thinking——'

'Well?'

'You would be the only one—to stay behind.'

'There are thousands leaving, now that their time is up.'

'Not around Chippewa.'

'Then you think me a coward?'

'I did not say that.'

'It is in your mind.'

'Not at all. But let us drop this.'

'I came to talk about just that thing. But I feel I am trespassing here—come outside.'

He sprang up in a temper, then staggered, and would have fallen had not John caught his arm.

'Seth, lie down at once.'

He pulled him gently but firmly to the bed. Seth yielded with a laugh.

'I guess I am limp—for the moment. Excuse me, I will be right in a minute.'

John covered his feet with a rug.

'I wonder how long it takes a doctor to get round in these parts,' he said, looking at his watch. Seth sat up.

'Pshaw, man—did you send for one?'

There was a knock at the door, and a man of seedy appearance came in and introduced himself as the 'doctor of Marathon city.' He apologised for not arriving before, omitting to state that the cause for his delay was the charms of a brandy-and-soda he had been discussing in the landlord's private room. He was sober enough, however, to see what was the matter with Seth.

'You will lay where you are, young man,' he said solemnly—'jest exactly where you are—until I tell you to git. How long? Mebbe a week—mebbe two. All depends.'

'Nonsense!' Seth answered. 'I am going on to Chippewa to-morrow.'

'Then you will die, sir; I sw'ar you will. You are on the way to having a very bad fever.'

'Blast the fever!' Seth said with shut teeth. 'I must see my folk—and to-morrow.'

'Have 'em here,' said the doctor, beginning to wake up to the importance of securing a patient.

'They could not come.'

'They will if they value your life. Can't your brother, here,' turning to John, 'tell 'em about it, and tote 'em round?'

It was now John's turn to be taken aback, the more so as Seth caught up the notion eagerly. His mind just now had only room for one thought.

'Why, that is a good idea,' he cried. 'You will do it, I know, John, and take my letter with you. It is a mean thing for me to trouble you, but I reckon I do feel pretty sick after all. I would be very grateful.'

John sighed and yielded. The lad was very ill. This doctor was a beast, yet right, John thought, in his opinion. Care and nursing by experienced hands was absolutely necessary.

'I will go,' he said quietly, and helped Seth to undress. He then had an interview with the hotel-keeper and his wife, the result of which was that everything was given to Seth which he could need for the present. A telegram was despatched to Mrs. Burletson, a light sulky chartered, and a swift horse, and John set off for Chippewa as fast as the animal would go. In his pocket was the letter for Jean, which Seth had written in the cars.

CHAPTER IX.

JOHN had not spoken to Jean since Seth left for the front. When they had passed one another in the street or met in the store, she would bow coldly, he simply raised his hat. People speculated much on what could have caused such a breach between these friends. Few believed that John's refusal to volunteer could be the sole reason. But everybody was sure of one thing. There never would be a reconciliation, even if Seth were killed in the war. Jean's pride was proverbial, and every one knew the obstinacy of the Burleston family. There was a strong feeling of sympathy among the older folk with Luke Selby. Through no fault of his own, he had lost the most eligible son-in-law in town. It was hard luck. The sentimental side of the affair did not appeal to the citizens of Chippewa, while the young people who had looked upon John as certain to be Jean's choice, were glad now to a man—and a

woman—that he had lost her. 'The girls of this town,' one of them proudly said, 'are not going to marry "home guards," no matter what they thought before.'

John left the horses a few blocks away and entered the store by the back door. This was in order to avoid Luke, who had not only apologised in set terms for the warmth of his language on that fatal Sunday, but was becoming cordial and friendly to a degree John found distinctly embarrassing. Mrs. Selby was the right person to see. John knew she did not care for Seth, but was sure the boy's illness would touch her heart at once, and she would tell Jean. He went, therefore, straight to the kitchen. As luck would have it, Jean, and not her mother, was in the kitchen at this particular moment. The entrance of such a totally unexpected person as John made Jean give a very perceptible start, and blush violently—things which gave her particular annoyance under the circumstances.

'I beg your pardon,' John said, hastily stepping back, and in so doing treading hard upon the tail of Jean's cat, which mewed dismally. 'I have come with a message'—he was going to say 'from Seth,' but Jean did not allow him to finish.

'You will find mother,' she said, 'in the store.'

But John stood his ground. He had taken up the aggrieved cat, which recognised him and purred with all its might.

'I will see your mother presently. But as we have met, Jean, I must tell you first. Seth asked me to come.'

'Seth? Where is he?'

'Robjoint's Hotel, Marathon. Held there by sickness on his way home.'

'He must be very sick.'

Her tone sounded unsympathetic, and John, though he suspected that this was assumed for his benefit, felt indignant on Seth's account.

'He is—or I would not be here. The doctor said that if he stirred one step, he'd not answer for his life. Even then it was all we could do to keep Seth down. I had to quiet him by a promise to bring a letter and tell you exactly how things were. It was much against my will.'

Jean's eyes dropped before the look he gave her.

'You have been put to much trouble,' she murmured, taking the note. 'Seth—Seth should thank you.'

There was a touch of bitterness in the last words which John could not understand.

'Won't you sit down, John?' she continued. 'Mother will be so pleased to see you.'

John thanked her, watching her under his eyebrows with dreamy interest. It was unnatural even yet that this was not his Jean. The old wound began to ache again, and John gave himself a shake, and tried to turn his thoughts to Seth. What would the effect of this letter be? Jean's enthusiasm for the war, which had been a passion before Bull Run, was her religion now. It was less aggressive. She would not now sing 'John Brown's Body' from a public platform, but it was infinitely deeper. This was a bad time for the news of Seth's change of ideas. She should have seen him first. With these thoughts passing through his mind, John's eyes became intently fixed upon Jean's face, until she glanced up and saw him.

'Have you—do you know what is in this letter, may I ask?'

'He told me something—not much.'

'About his giving up the army?'

'Yes.'

Jean was very pale now, but in her eyes there was an expression not pleasant to see.

'Did you talk with him any? You advised him, perhaps?'

Her voice was quiet, with a curious vibration in it.

John was rather taken by surprise. He had not expected to be questioned about the letter, and now, anxious not to betray what Seth had said, which he felt must not come through a third person, hesitated before he answered. Jean noticed this, and the suspicion in her eyes deepened.

'We had a few words,' John answered; 'but they were of no importance. He was too sick for me to allow him to talk.'

'No importance! Do you say that? Yet, after all, maybe I am wrong,'—her tone was now bitterly sarcastic—'perhaps we speak at cross-purposes. *You* may not think it of importance for an honest man, who was as brave as the bravest, to turn back, when for his country's sake he should go forward as he never went before. Oh, why have you, of all men, crossed his path just now. Sick? He must be nigh mad to listen to you, who never went at all.'

The inner door opened, and Mrs. Selby came in. Jean stopped, and walked away to finish her letter. Mrs. Selby's honest face beamed like a sun.

'You, John, callin'? What a pleasure it is to see you. What has brought ye?—though never think of explainin' to me. I

find it too good to see your face here once more to ask for explanations. How is your dear mother?'

'Well—thank you, kindly.'

'Which you are not,' Mrs. Selby said, frowning. 'You are looking death pale.'

John smiled at her tone of solicitude.

''Tis nothing but the want of a meal, ma'am. I have ridden from Marathon, and had not time for a bite. You are wanted, Mrs. Selby, badly.'

His voice was very determined. Jean had roused him effectually; not so much by the insinuation that he had tried to influence Seth—that, he thought, was natural after the way she had misunderstood him—but by her apparent inclination to question her lover's motives when she should have been engrossed by anxiety for his sufferings.

'I came with a message for Jean,' John went on; 'I must give it to you. Seth is at Marathon, too weak to move, and if he does not receive care and good nursing, and get a sight of the face he loves, I doubt if he ever will move again. I thought perhaps you would go with Jean, or send her with some nurse. He must see her, and that at once—I promised it.'

John said the last words with slow emphasis, looking hard at Jean, who was now nervously folding up her letter.

Mrs. Selby held up her hands in dismay.

'Seth lying sick at Marathon! Dear, dear, how misfortunate. Of course I will go. It is awkward about the chicks, but they must rub along some way. My sister is come with her husband to stay a week, and she will see to them and things here. How to get there quick enough—that is the only point. 'Tis so far to Marathon—twenty miles at least.'

'There is a train in an hour. I must go back by it, and could help you pack your traps along if it is too soon. Otherwise, I will fetch the team from the farm and drive you.'

Mrs. Selby gave a complacent little chuckle.

'That is our John, every time. Sparing nothing when his mind is made up. We will catch that train. Your horses shall not come out for us. I will manage. Now, tell me what ails the boy while I get some lunch. Nay,' as John protested, 'but you must have some right now. Jean, mebbe you had better go and pack up your things.'

Mrs. Selby, for once in her life, had taken command of the situation. Jean, who had been listening with downcast eyes, approached John and looked up swiftly and then away again.

'I want to thank you,' she said in a whisper. 'But we need not trouble you to go again to Marathon.'

John's face did not change.

'There is no trouble in it. I came because I reckoned his life depended upon it. I shall go back because I said I would.'

He turned to Mrs. Selby; but paused to say to Jean—

'I would have you remember that he wrote that letter before I met him. I do not say this to change your opinion of me. Nothing now will do that. But I wish you should know the truth.'

All this puzzled Mrs. Selby desperately, but she could ask no questions until she made an excuse to leave John eating his lunch, and go to Jean's room.

'Jennie, what has been gain 'tween John and you? I never saw him look so stormy. What have you said?'

'I asked questions—I said what I had no right to. 'Twas unjust and mean. There, mother, leave me alone, *please*. I cannot talk of anything. I wish we could go this minute to Marathon. Why, Seth may be dying all those miles away.'

Mrs. Selby soothed her.

'He'll be far from that, dearie, trust me. Men, even the best like John, is always fussed and flustered where there is illness. They lose their heads like frightened hens unless they be doctors. Now, Seth, I take it, has lost blood and nerve through hard times, and so he's wilted considerable, and we must go to him. Pack your trunk with clothes for a week, and tell your father about it—leave all else to me.'

Jean meekly obeyed. For the first time for many years she was content, even glad, to take the second place.

Mrs. Selby kept her word, and with Jean, very pale and distressed, arrived at the depôt five minutes before the train was due. John was waiting for them, and finding them a comfortable corner in one of the cars, departed immediately for another, and was not seen again until Marathon was reached. At the hotel Mrs. Selby found that rooms had been engaged for her by John, by telegraph. The only difficulty left for her was to overcome the doctor, who was awaiting their arrival in a very spirituous condition. Mrs. Selby, however, after a brief examination of Seth, made short work of the medical man. She listened in silence to his advice, asked for his bill, paid it, and showed him the door.

All the time this was going on Jean sat by Seth's bedside,

holding his hand and trying to smile, and feeling so wretched and full of self-reproach that at the least provocation she would have burst into tears. Seth, to her eyes, seemed dying, and with a bitter pang Jean felt that it was she who had sent him to his death. His cheeks were sunken, his complexion dull and unhealthy, he was a mere skeleton of his former self. The only comfort Jean found was the brightness which came into his eyes at the sight of her face, and his look of peace as he lay holding her hand, basking in the content her presence gave him. Seth was perfectly happy. He suffered little pain now, and the rest of body and mind and heart that came with Jean, with the care and nourishment he had already received, had much revived him. He only felt tired and a little faint. Neither of them thought for the moment of John, who, finding that Mrs. Selby was more than equal to the doctor, and all other matters having been arranged, took his departure without entering the sick-room again.

Seth was able to resume his journey in a week. When he asked the hotel-keeper, with many inward qualms, for his bill, that gentleman said that his charge was nothing. He was pleased, he said, to do his humble share in the defence of his country by 'helping one of her gallantest boys,' at the expression of which beautiful sentiment Seth thanked him warmly, and Jean gave him her sweetest smile. Mrs. Selby alone had suspicions concerning the good man's exceeding effusiveness. She remembered that when she went to look for him soon after their arrival, she had seen him in earnest conversation with John, who walked hurriedly away. With characteristic prudence, however, Mrs. Selby kept her ideas to herself.

Seth received a small ovation the day he arrived at Chippewa. A large number of his old scholars were at the depôt, raising shrill cheers as the train came in, and fighting hotly for the privilege of carrying his trunk to the store; while all the unoccupied members of the community looked on and vigorously applauded. The next day invitations poured in from citizens who had sons or brothers in the army, and wished to ask numberless questions. This popularity was pleasant at first, but it had a seamy side. He could not show his face in the street without some one he had never spoken to before stopping him and inquiring anxiously after his health, and wanting to know whether, from his experience, he judged the preparations the Government were making to increase the army would prove sufficient for

their purpose. The worst of it was everybody took it for granted that he was to return to the front as soon as his health was re-established. Jean alone said nothing. Seth rather congratulated himself upon her silence. Had she nourished any serious intention of opposing his idea, or even had a strong feeling against it, she was the last person to have kept it to herself. As time went on, however, and his strength began to return, Seth found the attitude of his own mind changing. The air was full of war, not mere talk and speculation, but stern reality. Men were enlisting now who had never thought of doing so four months ago. Bull Run, while it winnowed out mere sentiment and silenced the boasters, brought to the surface all that was manly and true in the north. The Government, with Lincoln at its head, stood firm as a rock, and the most enthusiastic southerner paused and sobered down as the news of what the Yanks were doing spread through the south.

One evening, when alone with Jean, Seth said, with a sudden laugh—

'Jeannie, where's the note I wrote you from the cars—the one John brought for me? Have you burnt it?'

'Of course not.'

'Give it to me, dear, then—I will.'

She turned to look at him, a brightness in her eyes, a joy in her face he had not seen for a long time, and which gave him a sudden pang.

'Seth, do you mean that you are—that you do not feel what you told me then?'

'You have just precisely struck it, sweet; only you might put it more strongly. When I put those words to paper, I was the most sick and sorry cuss that ever lived—ugh!—I was limp as a drowning fly—meaner than dirt. I tell you I take back every word of that letter, and all I said to John next day. To prove it, I may inform you, mistress mine, that if my arrangements can be fixed up as I have figured them out this afternoon, I'll be with the boys in the Shenandoah valley within two weeks. What do you say to that?'

He held her at arm's length, the better to catch the full effect his words might make.

'Oh, Seth, I am so thankful—so glad. I do not know how to express what I feel. I was determined I would never ask your plans; nor, after what you have suffered, would I ever urge you to go again. But if you think *this!* Well, I think it is perfect.

It will be very hard to part with you so soon, but it is just what a man like you would want to do. *You* could not fail where your country needed you.'

'My country?'—he gave a little laugh, with a touch of bitterness. 'I am not sure that my country has very much to do with it. I rather think it has been a person who shall be nameless. I grant she has said nothing; but her face has not been silent. Speaking soberly, love, it has come to me lately in a way it never came before—either I would go to the war or set you free to find a man who would.'

'Nonsense, Seth,' she cried vehemently. 'Please do not say those things; you do yourself injustice. I have been nothing. If I had not been in the world you would have done the right; I know you would.'

'I do not think so,' he said slowly; 'no, I do not. I am not weaker than the average—not so weak, I hope, as some. But to sacrifice all that is most precious—you, and our future home, for duty, I could not do it. Some men could—a few—but I do not belong to that company, and the sooner you realise that the better. I will go to the war; but if you told me to stop at home and marry you, I would let my country go. I am speaking the plain truth; how do you like it?'

He smiled, then sighed, and looked absently out of the window. His mind was full of John this evening. Their meeting at Marathon had proved to him beyond a doubt of the noble stuff of which that man was made, and a vague desire troubled him to make Jean see what he saw now. Yet the wish was not easy of fulfilment, and Seth let it drop again, and gave himself up to the pleasure her answer afforded him.

'I will not have you say such absurdly foolish things. You, who have never spared yourself, who have bled in the cause, and dare, with open eyes, to do so again—to say you cannot do your duty! You make me wild, Seth. Find me a man who has done more, or so much. That you once felt differently is nothing; I could never bring that up as worth a thought. You were sick: now you are yourself again. If you thought what was foolish, I did worse, for I was unjust.'

'You. Why?'

'I did wrong to a good man.'

Jean, also, was thinking of John to-night.

(To be continued.)

WOMEN'S PUBLIC WORK.

III.—INSPECTORS.

ELEVEN years ago the Local Government Board appointed a lady to inspect boarded-out children, paying 'surprise' visits throughout the country. A great deal of good work has been done by Miss Mason, but, owing to the widely scattered area over which her work extends, it is impossible to pay more than from three to four hundred visits in a year; while there are upwards of 1800 children under her supervision, managed by 157 committees. In some districts the inspector has only been seen once in seven years. It is obvious that such inspection is either not needed or is grossly inadequate. Cases of abuse and neglect have been discovered, but it is impossible to say whether many others have not escaped notice. It is very difficult, too, if not impossible, to form an accurate opinion as to the treatment of a child during one hurried visit to strange surroundings, or to judge of the capability of the local committee.

Some four years ago the London County Council recognised the fact that women understand the supervision of babies better than men can do, and while retaining male inspectors for detective work, appointed a female inspector, under the Infant Life Protection Act, to take charge of houses under their authority in which more than two children were taken for payment. Up to last year the age of children legislated for was fixed at twelve months, but recent disclosures of the cruel traffic carried on in these helpless little beings has led to the passing of a new Act, raising the age to five years. Under the last Act, about fifty of these baby farms were under supervision, but the number is now doubled, and two additional lady inspectors are required for London. The inspector pays 'surprise' visits, satisfies herself as to the treatment and condition of the infants, sees that the rules are kept, attends inquests and police court prosecutions, has sometimes to trace a child which

has been removed, and sends in her reports daily. There is no examination for these posts, but candidates have to show certificates. That of the sanitary institute and of a nursing institute is of use, and especially must proof be given of a thorough knowledge of the management of infants. Great vigilance and discretion are required, painful experiences are common, and frequent visits to doctors and rescue homes are entailed, so that it is a prudent rule which fixes the age of applicants between twenty-eight and forty years. The old Act was practically a dead letter out of London, and if this much-needed amendment should be enforced throughout the country, more inspection will be needed.

The appointment of women as sanitary inspectors is of recent date. Nottingham led the way in 1890, and in 1893 Kensington appointed two ladies, in addition to its six male inspectors, to inspect sanitary conditions in places where women and children were employed. As early as 1890 a lady in Norwich had obtained the certificate of the Sanitary Institute; several followed in 1892; but of those who now hold it, the larger number passed the examination within the last two or three years. The departure is part of the increased activity which the last half century has seen aroused in all matters affecting public health. It has become difficult to believe how recent this activity is, or to realise what extremely dirty people our forefathers were.

Going back to the conditions of early times, we gain our knowledge by the landmarks of great plagues and sicknesses which stand out from the ordinary mortality. In 430 a plague swept through England, which carried off so many that scarcely enough living remained to bury the dead. In 772, 34,000 persons died at Chichester, converting it from a thriving borough to a place of desolation, a blow from which it never entirely recovered. In 1368, the most terrible plague the world has ever witnessed advanced from the East to the fruitful soil Great Britain had prepared for it, and three or four millions of lives paid forfeit: more than half the population. Its ravages were fiercest in the great towns, where the filthy, undrained streets were the constant haunt of leprosy and fever. In the burial-ground upon which the Charter-house now stands, more than 50,000 corpses were interred. Half the priests of Yorkshire are known to have perished; and the records show that half the parishes in Norfolk changed hands. Even after

the pestilence had worn itself out, the sweating sickness (supposed by some to be what we now call influenza) was prevalent, aggravated by bad food and dwellings, and by the fever and ague which hung round the great expanses of undrained and stagnant marshes. The homes of the poor were of wood, with earthen floors, covered with rushes which became saturated with filth, and lay till they rotted. The narrow streets were unpaved and undrained, with the moisture running into open cess-pools. Vegetables were rare, and salt meat was the staple article of food. Sir Thomas More, in his 'Utopia,' speaks forcibly of the squalid and pestilential dwellings in which the lives of the people were passed, and the pictures he draws of his ideal city, with broad streets and spacious gardens and houses, 'builded in gorgeous and gallant sort,' show that a higher conception had been reached.

With the reign of Elizabeth matters began to improve, and we are able to trace the rise of the modern idea of domestic comfort. In 1603 bills of mortality for London were first compiled in a formal manner. These perished in the Great Fire, but from those kept immediately after we learn that the death-rate two hundred years ago was eighty in the thousand. A hundred years ago it was from thirty to forty in the thousand, one-third being children under two years of age. In a number of the 'Gentlemen's Magazine,' published a hundred years ago, we find small-pox raging, and the number of burials in London exceeding the christenings by a thousand.

The history of modern sanitary service really dates from 1831, when the terrible outbreak of cholera in this country carried off 31,000 people. The unsparing disease swooped down alike on town and country. It attacked little out-of-the-world hamlets, lying far up amid the pure air of Yorkshire moors, or nestling in the peaceful combes of Devon, but where the midden drained in the pond that supplied the drinking-water, and the sleeping-room overlooked a cess-pool, and scourged them with the same vigour as the crowded cities. It opened people's eyes once for all to the terrible dangers of dirt. The nation began to set its house in order. In Parliament it led to the creation of a Central Board of Health, which, though it soon ceased to exist, had given an impetus; and in the following year Dr. Southwood Smith set on foot an agitation on public health, which was not suffered to subside. An Act was passed for the registration of births and deaths, and by 1840 the

death-rate stood at twenty-five in the thousand. The first salaried medical officer of health was appointed by Liverpool, followed by the City of London. Eight years later another alarm of cholera scared Parliament into passing a resolution for the improvement of sanitary conditions throughout England and Wales, and attempts were made to deal legally with draining, cleansing, and water supply. The great forward step was taken in 1866, when power was given to districts to provide water from the public funds, and to deal with the unwholesome dwellings of the poor. The Ladies' Sanitary Association, formed in 1858, and other private agitations, had been doing good service, in preparing the public mind to receive drastic reform, and in 1872 the first Public Health Act was passed, and led to the creation of the Local Government Board, and to universal appointment of medical officers of health. That crusade began in favour of sanitary conditions that is now pressed forward with such vigour, and measures have been passed from time to time, strengthening and enlarging the old Acts. Nearly 1800 bodies now administer these Acts throughout England and Wales, exclusive of London, which has a Health Act to itself, and which is dealt with by thirteen district boards and twenty-nine vestries, each having its staff of medical officers, its inspectors of nuisances, and engineer or surveyor. The death rate during the past year was eighteen in the thousand, but as it is computed that 125,000 preventible deaths still occur yearly, there remains something for sanitary work to effect.

The example of Nottingham and Kensington in appointing women on their staff has been followed by Islington, St. Pancras, West Ham, Hackney, and Battersea, in London, and by St. Helens, Manchester, Brighton, and Liverpool, in provincial towns. The increase has been slow, but it seems not unlikely that a larger demand may arise all at once as prejudice wears away, and the utility of these appointments becomes more widely known. More than eighty ladies already hold the certificate, so that although some of these are engaged in lecturing, and some have passed the examination for their private satisfaction, there would be no lack of candidates for fresh posts.

Examinations are held twice a month for nine months of the year at different centres throughout Great Britain, and candidates are strongly advised to prepare themselves by entering for the course of training given at the Parkes Institute, Margaret

Street, Cavendish Square. The syllabus of subjects for examination is a long and complicated one, and the Institute very wisely makes no difference in the standard set for men and women.

A knowledge of elementary physics and chemistry is required, of the principles of hydraulics, hydrostatics, and pneumatics, and of the composition and properties of air and water. The principles of ventilation and a practical acquaintance with such points as the number of cubic feet of air required for each person, and how to measure them, the advantages and disadvantages of methods of artificial lighting, a knowledge of drainage and sanitary appliances, and some acquaintance with the law as to nuisances, such as smoke and household refuse, as to infectious disease and food supply. Besides two lectures a week at the Institute, the course further includes two visits a week of practical inspection—visits, for example, to a common lodging-house, a steam laundry, dairy premises, disinfecting yards, and sewage farms. In a dairy the pupil learns that in accordance with the Dairy and Milk Shop Act, walls must be impervious up to a certain height, all drains outside the building, the slabs on which the pans stand of stone or slate; and so on through other industries. Lectures deal with such subjects as How to read an Act of Parliament, Methods of disinfection, Plumbers' work, and kindred matters. Among the questions given at an examination were the following: 'A room in a common lodging house is 20 feet square, and the walls 7 feet high; the ceiling slopes on every side to the centre of the room, where it is 12 feet above the floor. What are the cubic contents of the room, and how many adults should be allowed to sleep there?' 'Give a summary of the clause relating to sanitary conveniences for factories contained in Part III. of the Public Health Amendment Act, 1890.' 'If there is reason to believe that sewer gas is escaping into a room, how would you proceed to examine the drains and to what point would you look?'

It is not impossible to pursue the necessary course of study at home, but it is a great waste of energy, and those who do so are heavily handicapped.

The sanitary inspector must have the Public Health Acts at her finger-ends, so as to know exactly what she may and may not do. She should have good health and good manners, for she will require all her tact and address to carry her through the

disagreeable work of finding fault with other people's domestic arrangements.

Being appointed, the duties of a lady inspector consist chiefly in visiting laundries and workshops in which women and girls are employed; examining their ventilation and sanitary accommodation; making orders for necessary work; remonstrating on overcrowding, and, if not rectified, reporting it. She does not superintend drainage work, but the need for it is reported by her to the medical officer. Notices have very often to be served several times before they are attended to, and work looked after in course of operation. The inspector keeps a register of all workshops on her beat, and each evening writes up her diary, making notes of special features and of places upon which a vigilant watch is desirable. The work is tiring, as it entails so much walking, and in parts much climbing of stairs. In 1896 in St. Pancras the inspector made 3203 inspections and 286 re-inspections. St. Pancras also inspects the houses of out-workers. In Islington she found out 208 work-places not on the register, 81 of which had never been visited by any factory inspector. In St. George's, Southwark, a lady is employed to inspect tenement houses, and has been very successful in dealing with the poor women, upon whom the health of the houses in a great measure depends. The man is often away from home, and the wife is glad to confide her difficulties with rats, drains, and dust-holes to a lady.

The verdict is unanimous as to the excellent work done and the zeal and discretion shown by the women inspectors. Very much good work has been effected, mainly by their persuasive powers. 'The sanitary lady,' as she is usually called, is often looked upon as a friend, as one who can get at the landlord and oblige him to undertake repairs, which the occupier is powerless to exact. Now and then a surly occupier is encountered, but it is less difficult than of old to enforce remedial measures. A little talk often leads to alterations, to the fixing of ventilating boards in the windows of stuffy workrooms, to the use of coal or gas fires in preference to gas jets; and after a time the owner can be led to acknowledge the improvement, and even to take a pride in it. In one case quoted, the dressmaker allowed that the atmosphere of her workrooms was disgusting. 'She never went in herself; it made her sick. If she wanted anything, she called the forewoman outside; she thought it was the girls!' and she was loud in her expressions of satisfaction at the change

produced by proper ventilation. There is small doubt that in some cases a woman succeeds better than a man. Women workers will naturally talk more freely upon sanitary matters with one of their own sex. Male inspectors are apt to be too peremptory or to be shy of speaking out.

The first woman inspector appointed in Kensington has now got an appointment as Health Lecturer in New South Wales; and signs are not wanting that the need of female inspection for women and children begins to be felt in our colonies, where, above all, they are exacting in demanding the highest certificates.

As long ago as 1878 Mrs. Paterson, the devoted founder of the Women's Trade Union League, began an agitation at the Trades Congress for the appointment of female factory inspectors. The small unions she had succeeded in forming had gained that courage to make complaints, which isolated workers lack, and it soon became clear to her that there are many troubles which women will only unfold to women, and many conditions in working life of which it needs a woman's eye to discern the full significance. It was an uphill task for Mrs. Paterson and her slender following to convince the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Unions of the good sense of her demand, but as year by year she pressed the matter forward, she saw its members change from strong opposition and contemptuous toleration to warm advocacy. In 1892 a deputation composed of representatives of numerous bodies waited on the Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews), and gradually those interested built up a clear outline of the duties which should be relegated to women inspectors. Their hands were greatly strengthened at this juncture by the appointment of four women assistant commissioners on the Labour Commission of 1892. The minute inquiries so admirably made by these ladies into women's industries, and the production of their famous Blue Book, showed how capably women could perform this kind of work, and how many grievances and tyrannies they could unearth which the workers would not speak of to a man.

The Blue Book, which is an invaluable handbook for all those interested in industrial questions, showed the appalling amount of abuses, hitherto unsuspected, which required redress. 'Breaches of the Truck Act, through which the work-girls were paid in kind with green apples or with tea charged at twopence an ounce, and bought outside for three-halfpence for two ounces; constant accidents, attended by wounds and loss of sight; open

cess-pools into which the mill-pipes drain, so that the girls worked in sickening effluvia and a constant disregard of every decency of sanitation.' These were some of the facts brought to light by the inquiries of the Women Commissioners.

One witness after another before the Labour Commission recorded their conviction that women were needed to inspect women. Not that these workers complained—no, all the complaints came from the men; but there were those who had the wit to see that this silence spoke more significantly than words.

It was in 1893 that Mr. Asquith definitely announced to a large and influential deputation, representing many societies and unions, that in addition to increasing the number of men inspectors, two women would be appointed 'as an experiment.' The first was Miss Abraham, one of the Lady Commissioners; her colleague, Miss Paterson, had shown her capacity by an admirable collection of statistics among the working classes in Scotland. And now there was no longer silence in the ranks of the women workers. As soon as it was known that one of their own sex could be appealed to, complaints poured in. As one instance of abuse after another was redressed—of illegal hours, of insufficient shuttle-fencing, of unhealthy surroundings, these complaints became more defined, more circumstantial. The inspectors' attention was directed here and there, and not only by the girls themselves; letters were received from fathers, brothers, and lovers. Two inspectors were (as a factory hand expressed it) 'not enough to go round.' Two more were appointed, and the five now at work cannot satisfy the demands upon them. Their latest annual report, which is a very human document, gives some idea of the amount of work they got through. From forty to fifty towns have been visited by each lady, many repeatedly. Miss Paterson, in addition to visiting forty towns, most of them several times, made a special inquiry into earthenware factories, and as to fines and deductions in the textile trades of several north-country towns, and a joint inquiry with Mrs. Tennent into the white-lead factories of Newcastle and Glasgow. Miss Deane has made a special report on the application of the Factory Act to shirt and collar industries, on certificates of physical fitness for young women and children, and on the exposed condition of young women and girls engaged on the banks of ironworks where no special shelter is provided. Miss Anderson has made special reports as to the effect on the workers' health of the polishing process in

pencil and brush factories; on the desire of the workers in the wholesale clothing trade to participate in the 'Particulars' clauses (in plainer words, that they should be told beforehand the exact sum they will be paid for a given piece of work). Equally useful reports have been sent in by Miss Rose Squire.

The claims made by workers for investigation have largely increased during 1896. The greater proportion of these are still sent in anonymously, and, as might be expected, time is often lost through incorrect or inadequate information being given. Some curious cases of ignorance in the workers have been met with, some of them going daily to a factory or workshop without knowing the postal address, or even the name of the employer. Another prosecution remained in abeyance for some weeks because none of the women could recollect the date on which the law was infringed. The fear of being found out is so great that even letters of thanks are generally anonymous; but the inspectors 'are impressed by the growing feeling of confidence evinced by the workers in their willingness and power to help.'

That out of 74 prosecutions, 72 convictions should have been secured witnesses to the extreme caution and frequent leniency exercised by the officials. Due allowance has been made for the introduction of the last amendment to the Factory Act, with its many complicated additions, and owners have been warned and warned again before action has been taken. Six hundred and sixty-nine sanitary defects have been notified to the authorities, and repeated visits have been made to make sure that they were remedied. Great improvement has been effected in many Scotch and North of England factories; but Miss Deane writes: 'So great, to my knowledge, is the direct evil due to the want of elementary conditions of decency, if only in the lowered tone and lack of modesty among the women and girls who spend their entire day in these surroundings, that I shall not cease to reiterate the pressing need to remedy a state of things which actually amounts in some cases to cruelty.' Even where defects are obvious and freely acknowledged, an amount of unwillingness to take action, amounting to passive resistance, is met with. In the two worst cases of large factories, the employer was a member of the Sanitary Committee or an officer of the Local Authority. 'It is impossible,' says one of the inspectors, 'not to reflect on the indifference shown by large employers, who have been content to employ boys and girls under the conditions too frequently obtaining in large and important factories.'

Ventilation is a question which concerns factory equally with sanitary inspectors, and the latter bear out the assertion that the wish for better ventilation is on the increase. 'Nowhere,' Miss Paterson says, 'have I been so impressed with the foulness of the air as in laundries, in sorting-houses, wash-houses, and ironing-rooms alike.' Windows are kept tightly closed to exclude blacks, and no other system of ventilation is provided. 'Reasonable temperature' is a recent enactment, and one which materially affects the health and comfort of the workers. The inspectors find it hard to decide which extreme appears most injurious. They have found young girls working in a temperature of 80° to 86°,* pallid and exhausted, with great beads of perspiration rolling down their faces, and others in varnishing sheds, where no stove is lighted until the varnish becomes unworkable from the low temperature, or sitting with their feet wrapped in old sacks, stitching at military embroidery, with fingers blue with cold. In this case the employer, on being confronted with the inspector's thermometer, promised a stove, but a prosecution had to be instituted before the promise was fulfilled.

The inspectors have been specially vigilant wherever the conditions struck them as being injurious to young life, and concur in their opinion that this is a quarter upon which, in the best interests of the nation, more light should be thrown. If statistics could be obtained of the general physical state of young wage-earners, they believe that much would be done towards forming public opinion on the present industrial employment of young children. Some of these, they point out, are exempt from all regulation. Numbers of boys and girls of eleven or twelve are employed as errand-runners. Their hours are often excessive, they take their meals how and where they can, and are often out working late at night carrying heavy burdens.

Miss Squire, in her report, gives an interesting account of the attempt to nullify the effect of the overtime clause (which prevents a woman employed in a non-textile factory working for more than ten hours a day, except on thirty days a year, when two hours' overtime are allowed, on notice being given to the inspector) by treating different parts of the same shop as separate workrooms. The workers are moved about from one room to another, 'where the overtime is not all used up,' by

* 62° Fahr. is the optimum air temperature for a man; 5° more or less may be immaterial, but 10°, much more 20°, may well be considered unreasonable.

which ingenious expedient one dressmaker, with four rooms, succeeded in working overtime on 102 occasions.

A good many difficulties have to be overcome. No employer dares openly to obstruct the proceedings of one of H.M.'s inspectors; but foremen follow her about, and if she questions a hand, the latter is often immediately required to repeat what has passed, thereby intimidating in the spirit if not according to the letter. On a visit to Leeds, while speaking to a girl in a workroom, Miss Anderson touched her to attract her attention, with the result that the employer instigated the girl to bring an action for assault, which caused a good deal of trouble, although it was ignominiously dismissed. The fear of giving evidence is so great that statements are constantly retracted in court, and magistrates observe that it is lamentable to listen to the bolstering up of false statements by witnesses primed with untruths. The inspectors are most unwilling to call girls as witnesses, and whenever this is unavoidable, do their best to protect them from consequences. In an action brought by Miss Anderson against the Hon. Rowland Leigh, proprietor of a laundry at Forest Gate, for working girls twenty hours at a stretch, a substantial fine was secured; but the girls subpœnaed were dismissed immediately after the trial. They were assisted to find new places; and the trial was marked by the cutting rebuke of the presiding magistrate and the outcry of contempt in the public press.

The following is a genuine document posted in a wholesale clothing factory in the North: 'Attempts are being made to interfere with the liberty of female workers, and, as far as possible, prevent them doing any work at their own houses. Some feel it is intimidation. It is claimed that it is in accordance with certain Acts of Parliament relating to factories and workshops. There is nothing in any of the Factory Acts to entitle a factory inspector to know any worker's business, providing she is not working beyond the factory hours. No factory inspector has any right to visit workers at their private houses. Subject to the above, if you do not wish to answer the inspector, you may tell him to mind his own business; and if he takes liberty to enter a private house, the occupier may order him out or turn him out.'

In Ireland Miss Deane has this year conducted an energetic campaign, under the Truck Act, against a consistent and illegal system of payment in kind. All the embroidered linen sent over here from Ireland passes through the hands of middlemen,

called 'sprigging agents,' who distribute the work to be done in the homes of the district, at a minute wage paid in kind. At the truck-shops started by these agents, tea, candles, packets of nails, and bits of cloth are the wages paid for the skilled and beautiful work supplied.

The lady inspector, after a protracted and persistent investigation, succeeded in getting full penalties against one of the most notorious of these agents. Four informations were laid, and sentences given of £10 and costs in each case, or £44 in all; in default, distress; and in default of that, three months' imprisonment for each case.

On the whole, employers recognise that civility is the best policy, and that there comes a time when it is wisest to fall in with the views of the inspector. In some places, where marked improvements in ventilation and sanitation have been effected, neighbouring employers have asked for a visit, and welcomed advice as to the condition of their workpeople.

In some cases where the law has no power, such as, strange to say, the proper provision of drinking-water—an omission which causes great suffering in hot factories—strong representations have had satisfactory results.

The success of the women inspectors led some time ago to their organisation as a separate department under a female superintendent, who was answerable to no one but the Government. Her position was found to give strength and authority to the department, and the inspectors bear unanimous testimony to its success. For no intelligible reason, a retrograde step has been taken, and upon Mrs. Tennant's retirement from the post, a 'principal lady inspector' was appointed, who is liable to be obliged to justify her proceedings to the head of the men's department, thus hampering her work and lowering her status.

Examinations for factory inspectorships are held from time to time, as candidates are nominated by the Home Secretary to fill the vacancies which occur. The subjects are simple enough: spelling, handwriting, English composition and arithmetic, an elementary knowledge of the principal provisions of the Factory Acts of 1878, 1883, and 1891 to 1895. If more than one candidate is nominated for a single vacancy the examination becomes competition. Aspirants must not be misled by the comparative simplicity of the requirements. So few appointments are made, and the necessity of choosing the best persons for the work is so strongly felt, that no woman has much chance

of gaining the post who has not conclusively proved her capacity by previous work. The last two appointments have been made from the ranks of the sanitary inspectors, whose training is the best possible for factory inspection. Some jealousy has been caused in the ranks of the workers themselves by the consistent appointment of educated women. It is a point to which Mr. Asquith and those he consulted gave anxious consideration, and though there may be exceptional cases, it is felt that actual experience of the life is less important than the clear judgment, moderation, knowledge of the world, and power of presenting circumstances accurately and forcibly, which uneducated persons rarely possess. When we learn that inspectors conduct their own prosecutions without aid of counsel, the importance of manner, command of English, and the habit of trained thought will be readily understood.

More than twenty years ago the Local Government Board appointed Mrs. Nassau, senior, the late Tom Hughes's sister, as Inspector of Workhouse Schools. Her report still remains as an example and a model. It is clear and moderate, thorough and full of common sense, combined with hope and enterprise. Admirable as her work was, the experiment was not repeated at her death, or, until last year, when a lady obtained the post of inspector of barrack schools. The School Board has also made two appointments of an experimental nature. On all hands the tendency to give women a trial, is gathering strength, and those who can afford to train and wait, are preparing in many quarters for the demand, which they foresee to be not improbable.

More women are required to overlook their own sex, and boys as well as girls; and it will be well if before long there is no lunatic asylum, workhouse or prison, or any place where women and children work or are confined, which is not constantly visited by a woman inspector.

EVELYN MARCH-PHILLIPPS.

THE COUNTING.

BY ELLA N. LEFROY, AUTHOR OF 'JANET DELILLE,' ETC.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

BARBARA INGLIS (26). MARY CARTON (23).

SCENE.—*A back room in a London lodging, meagrely furnished. Very small fire in grate. A set of hanging shelves on which books with worn bindings are crowded.* BARBARA *sits at table, where common lamp stands. She has been writing, but now leans elbows on table and gazes from her. Sounds of footsteps on stairs, then knock at door.*

Barbara. Come in.

[*Enter* MARY CARTON. *She goes round table, puts hands on* BARBARA'S *shoulder, and kisses her.*]

Barbara. You are late to-night, Mary; that is, if you are only on your way home now.

Mary. We were kept late. Work came in that had to be done at once, so I've been hard at it. (*Sits down and imitates, with fingers on table, the working of a typewriter.*) Click—click—click—click! It gets on one's nerves sometimes. However, there's the extra pay for overtime, and it's needed badly at home just now.

Barbara. If you have not been home yet, you must be hungry.

Mary. No; I couldn't hold out any longer, so I've had tea and bread and butter at an 'A.B.C.' Mother will have something for me by-and-by. What have you been doing?

Barbara (*slowly*). What have I been—doing? I think—nothing.

Mary. I don't believe that.

Barbara. If only trying to do counted!

Mary. Well, it mostly does in the end; if one tries enough, one succeeds.

Barbara. Not always. I have a fancy—it comes to me sometimes as I sit here—that some of those who have proved biggest failures were, perhaps, those who tried the most.

Mary. Ye-es.

Barbara. But I suppose the trying doesn't count?

Mary (*moves to fender, where she sits down, picks up one or two half-burnt cinders that have fallen out of grate, and puts them back*). I should think that depends on who does the counting.

Barbara. Most people would not think there was anything to count.

Mary. Most people can't count far enough. What is the use of talking about billions to a child who can only get as far as twelve? Most of us can count twelve, and are supremely proud of it. But billions—we don't understand them; they give us a giddy feel; they are a visionary quantity. If you want to please those who can count twelve and no more, call the others who go on to billions visionary; it's an excellent word to damn with.

Barbara (*thoughtfully*). Yes, I know. But if twelve is most useful in everyday transactions, is it better to give up—billions?

Mary. Tell me what has been happening lately.

Barbara. What has been happening lately? Only, I think, what has been happening always. I think—I feel—things strange, beautiful, true. They are in me—of me. In the stillness they crowd about me. I reach after them—I almost hold them—think I shall give them to others. But, Mary, then, when I try to make them take visible shape, audible utterance, there is nothing but unshaped clay, ineffectual sound—dumbness, chaos. Though I labour as a mountain, it is only a mouse I bring forth. (*Rises.*) And yet it is there. I see and know what I would make others see and know. These things are true—truer than that I live, and breathe, and move; and yet I cannot give them out. I can only keep them here. (*Clasps her breast.*) It is not that I spare the pain; sometimes I drag at the strings of brain and heart, till it seems in the agony both must be rooted up. And, with it all, what have I to show? Sometimes, perhaps, I hold out a shred of beauty, a chip off the great whole, so small that none know it for what it is, or from what it comes, and none care. If once—only once—my dumb soul might speak—might sound the clear full note that, speechless though I be, I hear and understand! (*Paces room.*)

Mary. Patience, Barbara! You will do it yet.

Barbara (*absently, sitting again at table*). Not now. The time is too short.

Mary. Patience! I think, perhaps, already you have expressed more than you know. I think I have caught echoes of that clear full note you mean in some of your writing. It has happened once or twice; as I read, I have stopped and said to myself, 'Here speaks Barbara's soul.' There were bits of it in that magazine this month, were there not? I know my criticism is only feeling, but that seemed to me best of all you have written. Tell me what the editor said of it.

Barbara (*rousing herself and smiling curiously*). What did he say of it? He spoke to me kindly. He gave me good advice, most kindly meant.

Mary. He praised it, and advised you to persevere?

Barbara (*still smiling*). He said, 'Miss Inglis, I am going to advise you to revert to your earlier style; it was brighter and better than this—and for it there is a larger demand. This, he said—making the blue pencil travel down my pages and pause about the places where it may have been you said, 'Here speaks Barbara's soul'—'this sort of thing is better omitted. Our public—I may say the larger part of any public—does not want to think. And you will forgive me, Miss Inglis, if I suggest also that you scarcely seem to recognise your limit. This sort of thing'—the blue pencil tracked its way up and down—'you will forgive me saying it—this sort of thing you cannot do. Take my advice, and write us some nice bright little stories about—well, it matters little what about, so long as you make them bright, and keep on the surface. People prefer to keep on the surface. And you will be within your limit then, which is the great thing. Never attempt too much; keep within your own limit.' (*Pauses, and leans her chin on her hands.*) So, Mary, that is the state of the case.

Mary (*indignantly*). What did you say?

Barbara. Say? Oh, I thanked him and withdrew, as though I had been a well-conducted deputation. He was very kind. And it is quite true about the public—and also about me—as far as he knows. He has never seen inside. [*A pause.*

Barbara (*speaking suddenly*). This is the point, Mary; am I to be true to my outside, or my inside?

Mary (*decidedly*). Inside.

Barbara. Even although I know I shall never achieve out-

wardly what I feel inwardly? All the onlooker will ever see will be the struggles, the grotesque flounderings of a soul reaching after what it cannot grasp. I shall be, as I have been, a failure. Whereas, if I—keep within my limit (*laughs softly*), I might be, in the estimation of one section of the public at least, a success.

Mary. Would it ease you?

Barbara. Ease me? (*laughs again.*) I wonder if a 'Mute inglorious Milton' would find easement in writing *vers de société*? I am no Milton; but, at least, I know what muteness means, and I know also that the utterance which is no expression of self is still only to be dumb. Yet, if the circumscribed utterance gives pleasure to others, a pleasure which, perhaps, even the full note if attainable would fail to give—may that be the duty?

Mary. Is there not a higher duty to others than giving them pleasure?

Barbara. Ay; but if you are unequal to performing it?

Mary. Who is to judge of that? Until your last breath is drawn, who can say you are unequal?

Barbara. I know myself.

Mary. And if you are, Barbara, what if to try the big thing and fail is more than to do the little thing and succeed? What if the strength put into the trying is the thing that is to count?

Barbara (*dreamily*). Then all would turn upon: Who is to do the counting?

Mary (*in the same tone*). Yes—the whole of life. [*A pause.*

Barbara (*rousing*). I wish I might have your record to show, Mary—that I might count up as you will. You have fought for your mother and yourself, steadily, bravely, never losing heart.

Mary. My course has been plain; I never seem to have come where two ways met; nothing makes one's way so clear, I fancy, as having some one else whom one must help along. And I have had no visions or inspirations calling me, none have come to grip me, to be struggled with.

Barbara. But if they had?

Mary (*thoughtfully*). If they had—and if there was mother, too, I suppose I should have to—put them by.

Barbara. Then you think, after all, that I——

Mary (*quickly*). No, I don't. No rule is everywhere applicable or irrevocable, but, 'Do the highest.' And each of us must

decide alone what his or her highest is. Otherwise, the counting will add up all wrong. (*Speaks slowly, with breaks, as though thinking the matter out.*) Each circumstance of every case must alter it. Mountains of uncharity might be removed by realising that. (*Pauses.*) One must live, I suppose, yet there are cases when a call from something higher might compel to uttering, reverently, 'I don't see the necessity.' We may go to death in a march forward, if we may never fly to it in retreat. But most often we must live, if we can do so honestly, as conscience does not forbid. Barbara, I think you may continue to disregard the outside limit—if, doing so, you can live. (*Looks up smiling.*)

Barbara (*smiling also*). 'Something higher' combined with—common sense! Yes, it may be, when both are genuine, they are, if vision only stretched to let us see, identical. I think, Mary, I can, with common sense, afford the higher—now.

Mary (*eagerly*). You have been earning money lately, after all?

Barbara (*quietly*). I have enough for the time that still remains.

Mary. What do you mean?

Barbara. I went to see a doctor yesterday.

Mary (*turning towards her uneasily*). Why?

Barbara. Have you noticed anything about me lately?

Mary. Noticed? I—I—oh, Barbara!—you have been growing thinner—and whiter—and that cough——

Barbara. Yes. It has been going on a long time now. I thought I knew the reason, but wanted to be certain. So I went to a good doctor. He told me I was right.

Mary. Right—about what?

Barbara. It is unlikely I shall live another year.

Mary. Barbara! (*Drops on her knees beside Barbara's chair, and throws her arms round her.*) No, no! He said more than that—he said if you went somewhere—did something—you might get better?

Barbara. He said if I did some things that are impossible I might last longer.

Mary (*eagerly*). If you went to Davos? If you had good nourishment—wines—you might recover then?

Barbara. I can't have these things, and if I could——

Mary. But I'll work—I'll work harder—you shall go. I will——

Barbara. Mary, Mary dear! Think a moment! All your

work has to be for your mother. You can't do more than you are doing. Besides, it would not mean recovery for me; it would only give me a little more time (*smiling*) to fail in. Why, Mary, don't cry. This is not the sort of thing to cry about. Think!—the end of the struggling and floundering—dumbness gone—though speech itself will scarcely matter then. (*Her eyes light up, and the smile grows over her face, as she seems to see things not present.*) My soul will mix with other souls, and strike itself through them in perfect comprehension. Mary, think!

Mary (*regaining her self-command*). Yes, Barbara, I see now; at first I had only room for selfishness.

Barbara. And you still think I may go on trying, and failing? In these twenty-six years it seems I have done nothing that may count. In the time that remains, may I go on doing—trying to do—what will not count?

Mary (*rising and placing arm round Barbara's neck*). Yes, it is still what it was—what it always must be: Who is to do the counting? When we have answered that, we shall have settled also whether the doing or the trying is to count for most. But, I think, to count at all there must be trying.

Barbara. And I think I know WHO is to do the counting.

SEEN THROUGH A MICROSCOPE.

In these days of cheap science, there is one branch which might easily be pursued with pleasure and profit, but is absolutely neglected by the greater number of cultivated persons of both sexes. I mean the use of the microscope.

Those who have used that most fascinating instrument know well enough the pleasure of some new discovery, the excitement of finding an animalcule which has hitherto escaped us, the satisfaction that follows on learning from books or other sources of information, that our new object is not of a common species; and though every day the chances of finding anything unknown to science become rarer, still there is always the possibility of lighting on some sport peculiar to the surroundings in which it lives, which will amply repay our trouble.

It is often from ignorance of ways and means that such pleasant studies are neglected. Those who have been brought up in a family where the microscope was in constant use, will—if they have taken any interest in the matter—feel the loss of it should they be obliged to go without one, and many persons are doubtless under the impression that such instruments are far too costly for any ordinary purse. This is a mistake, as a good second-hand microscope can be had at a very moderate price, in fact, a five-pound note would probably buy all, and more than is necessary for a beginner, and a small instrument can be had for much less.

There is first to understand the way to use your new plaything, and that can be learned in a short time from the optician from whom you buy it. He should be a good, reliable man, that you may not be imposed upon, as spoilt or indifferent lenses render any instrument useless, and it is the lens that is the chief expense. When you have learnt how to adjust your instrument, where the different pieces fit, and how to move your stage—should you posses a movable stage, which is an advantage, but not a necessity—you may then proceed to the

selection of your lenses. The one-inch will be what you will most certainly require for ordinary use, the inch and a half for a low power if required, and the half-inch or three-fifths for a high power. Beyond these the beginner need not go, and indeed except for special purposes any other powers are not required. Two eye-pieces will probably belong to the instrument, A for use with the low powers, and B for the higher powers. If your microscope has the universal screw, you will have more comfort in adjusting the lenses, but with the use of adapters any lens can be made to fit. Care must, however, be taken of the delicate brass screws, that no force be used, as they are easily injured; in fact, care must *always* be taken in using a microscope, for like all fine workmanship it requires gentle handling.

There is one rule which should be impressed on all beginners. Never touch the surface of a lens or eye-piece with your finger, or with any substance. If it should become dim or dusty, wipe the surface as lightly as you can with a soft, thick camel's-hair brush. That is the only form of cleaning you can attempt with safety.

The mistakes a beginner makes are generally the following: he does not know how to manage the light; he is too anxious to use a very high power, and so often misses seeing the object, or sees it imperfectly; he does not know what to look at or where to find the best objects.

With regard to light, a white cloud is considered the best reflection for seeing an object by daylight, and for this the microscope must stand on a table near a window. The table should be strong and as steady as possible, as for looking at objects in water it is important that there should be no shaking. When the daylight is not good, any kind of paraffin lamp that gives a fair light will be found sufficient. Candle-light is useless, on account of the flicker, and gas is not much better; it should also be remembered that too strong a light is as trying to the eyes as a dim or flickering one.

The mirror that reflects the object must be very clean and bright; and, personally, I prefer a prism reflector, but that is an expensive luxury, and does not belong to every microscope as the mirror does.

The difficulty of managing a very high power is twofold. There is the loss of light—for as you increase the size of the object you require a stronger light to enable you to observe it easily, and there is loss of definition. The object is larger, but

it is less clear, and there is nothing to be gained in seeing a large indistinct object when it can be seen to perfection a few sizes smaller.

For the last mistake of the beginner, not knowing where to look for good objects, I am supposing him to be without a supply of prepared slides, such as can be bought at the optician's, and which he can in time learn to prepare for himself. Leaves of plants and flowers, wings of moths and butterflies, coloured feathers of birds, are all beautiful objects; but when they have been seen and studied they lose their interest compared with the busy life that is ever varying in water. A glass trough and a glass tube, for drawing up water, or securing any particular floating object, are all that are required in the first place. If there is any ditch, pond, or river, from which some water and a few scraps of water-weed can be obtained, there is every probability that some interesting animalcule will be discovered by patient search along the edge of the leaves of the plant. The one-inch lens is sufficiently strong for a beginner, and with this power many beautiful and curious things will come to view. A piece of weed will be found covered with transparent-looking flowers, tiny white bells, each on a separate stalk; suddenly they all vanish, only to reappear one by one as before. A passing water-flea disturbed them, or some one shook the table. They are very much alive in their own way, and of these little flower-like vorticelli there are a great variety, which may be classed—by the student who is so disposed—later on, when the first thrill of seeing what may be found is over.

A beautiful trumpet-shaped creature, called a stentor, is the next thing we are likely to find as being the commonest, and here again the varieties are numerous. Transparent white, pale pink, bright green, and peacock blue are among the colours; while they often differ considerably in form, some living in tubes, or seeming to grow out of each other, or growing two in a tube, but all, like the little vorticelli, are highly sensitive to a shake.

There is much that will exercise the temper of the student in his search after knowledge, and in this respect the study of the microscope is a most excellent and healthful pursuit. For instance, while you are gazing with delight at some lovely little creature you may never have seen before, a worm will come wriggling into the focus, and away goes the other before you have had time to classify it. Or you have found a rotifer, the

most fascinating class of all the water animalcules, and you are anxious to make quite certain whether he is a new variety or something you have already met with; and, even as you look, a large water-flea or worm will come and devour him before your eyes, while you are powerless to defend him from such an attack.

Patience and experience will at last enable those who are really interested to overcome many obstacles which at first seem discouraging. Those who are fond of natural history, will be able to see these little creatures *at home* with more certainty than the lion hunter who penetrates into the heart of Africa to observe the king of beasts. They live their whole life under our eyes. We can see them hatch from the transparent egg which sticks to the weed, and can watch their ways of living and their curious varieties of habit.

The *Melicerta ringens*, a rotifer that spends its life in building itself a brick castle that grows with its growth, and which forms some protection from many of its enemies, is one of the most exquisite and interesting of the rotifera, and can be met with in most rivers, lakes, and ponds. To see it working, watch the cilia that spin round like a wheel in the water, collecting, from the current thus made, the food and building material it requires for each small brick it forms; and then, when the round ball or brick has reached the necessary size, to observe how it bends over its head and carefully deposits the ball on the top of the wall in the space where it is most needed, is, to a tyro in microscopy, the greatest wonder of the many the microscope offers to the inquirer into water life.

The Latin names, for they rarely have any other, must not alarm the beginner; they are soon learned and easily remembered. To learn them, however, some book will be required, and it should not be too scientific for a novice. For this reason I do not recommend that great work on the microscope by the late Dr. Carpenter, to which our scholar may at last come; but such a book as the late Mr. P. H. Gosse's 'Evenings at the Microscope' is delightful reading; and for a book of wider reference, which takes in more scientifically all branches of microscope work, Messrs. Griffith and Henfrey's 'Micrographic Dictionary' is quite the best. Those who cannot afford a copy of the new edition can obtain an older one second-hand, but it should be remembered that the newer the edition in all such [illegible] more probability there is that it will be complete, for

nothing has less value than old-fashioned science. For those who wish to penetrate still deeper into the study of 'Water Life,' the beautiful, but expensive, volumes of Messrs. Hudson and Gosse's 'The Rotifera,' and Mr. W. Saville Kent's 'Manual of Infusoria,' will be found to contain all the information on the subject at present available.

Readers of Mrs. Gatty and Mrs. Ewing will remember that they both understood the pleasure to be obtained from the study of the microscope, and recommended it to others; and Mrs. Gatty was the happy discoverer of a new *alga* or water-weed which was named after her. The possibility of finding something rare is always an added interest to this pursuit, and I myself have had the gratification of introducing a very rare rotifer to a gentleman who had never come across it before, though his whole time is given to the collection of objects for the microscope.

There is a great variety in the animalcules to be found in different localities, or in deep or shallow water; and what is common in one part of England or Scotland, may be rare in another. But while there is a river, pond, or ditch within walking distance, there need be no lack of specimens for the water-trough, and there is no knowing what discovery may be in store for the intelligent observer.

Should there be no means of securing pond or even ditch-water, the very simple expedient of soaking a little hay or grass in water will produce many forms of infusoria—thus named from their being frequently developed in organic infusions—and by this means specimens for observation can be obtained.

It is not necessary to be in the least scientific or learned to enjoy the use of a microscope. My own scientific knowledge is to seek; though I know a rotifer from one of the infusoria when I see them.

The only trouble is, that one is apt to get an undeserved reputation for learning.

'You're awfully clever, and know all sorts of things, I'm told,' said a neighbour to me at a dinner party.

'Oh no, I'm not.'

'But you understand all about a microscope, don't you?'

'I use a microscope sometimes; but I don't know anything.'

'Oh!—that means you really know a lot!'

But my statement was true for all that.

E. C. POLLOCK.

A PHILOSOPHIC MIND.

"Alas! the gratitude of men
Hath oftener left me mourning."

WORDSWORTH.

THE vicar's wife says children don't think. But if you are on your back all day, it seems to me you have to, if it is only to pass the time—that is, if the pain is not very bad. If it is, you get tired of pretending you are an early Christian on the rack, or Regulus rolled down a hill in a barrel full of nails, or Cranmer at the stake, or anything of that sort, and you only want to have it go; though, of course, they are all interesting things to think about, and no doubt they all hurt worse than my back. Still the pain has nearly gone since the fat German doctor put me in plaster of Paris. The last one, you know—I've seen such a great many. He has done me so much good that I don't think I want anything particular now, at least for myself. They all seem to think it's a great pity the doctors can't make me able to walk at once; but I don't know. I think I've got used to doing without it. If you are nine years old, and have been lying down flat ever since you were four, you do get used to it, and I can't remember very well what things were like before my accident. I can just remember asking mother to give me a ball, which was on the top of the piano, and she was reading, and she said, 'Don't bother, Gerald, I'm busy.' Then I remember climbing on to the top of the big armchair and falling over somehow, and being a good deal hurt, and that's all. I've heard people talk about it since, when they think I can't understand, and I suppose they fancy it was mother's fault. But I don't see that it is. Do you? You see, if nothing had happened nobody would have blamed her. They seem to think she isn't sorry enough; but what good would it do? I know the vicar's wife thinks she ought to stay with me always, and never go out to parties or anything; but I'm sure she'd find it very dull. It would be a waste of any one so

pretty to have nobody to see her but daddy, and me, and the maids; and her smart dresses would all get out of fashion before they were worn out. I really shouldn't have much time to attend to her either, for, as it is, I never get through half the books I want to read, or the pictures I want to paint. I have a daily governess, and in the morning for an hour or two do some lessons; and they will put me to bed so early. My last trained nurse is perfectly horrid in this respect. However, I am glad to say she is gone on a holiday; and they seem to think Eliza, the nursery-maid, can do quite well for me till she comes back. I wish she'd meet with a more interesting case on her holiday. But she won't, because, as she says to the doctor, I'm the most interesting case in her experience. She's by no means the most interesting case in my experience. What is the use of having been trained in three hospitals, and having district-nursed and private-nursed so many years, if all you've got to say about it is, 'Little boys don't want to know about such things.' I tell her I like horrors, but it makes no impression on her. I suppose she has no power of observation, and her memory is bad.

Now, Eliza has got great powers of observation (particularly about people), and a very good memory, for she can tell you all about it (though I sometimes think she makes up where she can't remember). She has told me all about her family, and her neighbours and their families, and her young man and his family, and how much she wants to get married. I always tell her she doesn't know what married life is like, and that she had better keep a good place now she has it, which is what the vicar's wife tells the girls in the village. It never makes any difference to her though; and I don't think I shall say it any more at present, because she is in trouble about her young man, and he has got three months. That means three months in jail—and his family is so respectable! He went burgling; I forget exactly where, or what he burgled, though Eliza has told me all about it. The way she tells it makes it seem as if he wasn't to blame, or very little. However, the judge didn't seem to think so, since he gave him three months. The judge and jury had a spite against him, she says; and when I tell her that judges don't have spites, but always execute justice and maintain truth, like the magistrates in the Litany, she tosses her head, and says, 'Them as comes afore 'em tells a different tale.'

Poor Eliza! It is very sad for her, and I'm sure she is a great deal more to be pitied than I am; for all the silly visitors say, 'Poor little man!' and 'How hard it seems!' and 'A young life blighted.'

The last time Daddy was at home—for he's a sailor, and away a good deal—there were several silly visitors at tea, and one young lady said, 'Isn't it most *awfully* sad for your poor little kiddy?'

I don't like being called a kiddy, particularly not by young ladies, so I said, 'No, thank you, I have got resources,' which is what the vicar's wife says when mother pities her for always living in the country, and having too small a rectory to hold visitors. But it sounds so rude the way she says it, that I went on, 'I am quite happy, thank you, especially now that my nurse is away. I know she's Dr. Steinmann's best, for he said so; but she's fearfully strict, and she doesn't know any gossip.'

They all laughed; but the silly young ladies began again about 'How could I bear lying down?' and 'Wasn't I tired of it?' till I said, 'No, thank you, *not at all.* You see, I have never been used to anything else, and in some ways it is an advantage, because I have plenty of time for reading.'

'Oh, *what* a child,' said the young ladies; 'and *isn't* he a little saint?' they said to daddy.

'No, I don't think so,' said daddy; 'it's just his nature. I believe he's quite happy, really; he's got a philosophic mind, you see.'

'And that is a compensation for most things,' said the vicar, who came in just then.

'What are compensations?' I said, when the silly ones had gone, and there was nobody left but daddy, and the vicar, and mother, and the cat.

'Oh, something you like as well as what you can't have,' said mother, giving daddy tea with the boiled coffee milk in it, because she had forgotten he wanted some more, and had given the cat all the cream there was left. Daddy made a face, and said, 'Something you have to put up with instead of what you want.'

'Is that really what you meant?' I said to the vicar. He is a friend of mine, and nicer than his wife.

'Not quite,' said the vicar. 'It depends on who gives the compensation, you see. What I meant was, a better thing given instead of one not so good.'

'Do the people think it better who have it?' I said.

'Not always,' said the vicar, 'at this present——'

'Which present?' I said; and when he didn't hear, I went on, 'I want to know if there is any compensation for Eliza's young man?'

'Gerald,' said mother, 'how often have I told you not to chatter about the servants;' and she rang the bell for me to be taken to bed.

It was a little while after this conversation that an adventure happened. It had to do with the silver table, and I am afraid you will guess what sort of adventure it was; but I can't help that. We had not set up a silver table very long. It was not till everybody about had got one, that mother took the cloth off the little shiny Chippendale table in the corner, and told daddy she meant to turn it into a silver table. He said, 'Nonsense! We haven't got any silver worth putting out, and if we had it would only get stolen, since the drawing-room windows open on to the ground.'

But, next time daddy was away, mother went and got the silver cup he won for rowing, out of the plate chest, and granny's papboat, and the old tea-strainer with three crooked legs, and my christening mug, and coral, and bells, and the little candlesticks for sealing, and her bracelet of silver balls that wouldn't keep fastened, and she says is too big to be in the fashion, and she put them all out on the table with some silver buttons and charms. When daddy came home, she told him they looked very nice, and she wasn't going to take them away again. And daddy said, 'Very well, my dear; but if they all get stolen, I shan't buy you any more.' And mother said, 'Oh, they'll be all right; nobody is likely to steal them, with Gerald so much in the drawing-room all the afternoon.' Though I really don't know what good I should be if a robber did come in, for I can't get up to hinder him, and if I said 'Stop, thief,' I don't suppose he would mind me.

The day I speak of, daddy was away again, and mother went to the races. She had on a very nice new frock—the stuff they call 'grass lawn,' though, as it isn't either green like grass or white like a bishop's sleeves, I don't see the sense of the name. She couldn't give me a kiss, for she had a big hat on with a veil, but she patted my shoulder and told me to make myself happy. And she said she'd soon be home, and perhaps she could bring me a *marronglacé*, if there were any sweets for tea.

Then she gave me *Punch*, and the end of the bell-rope, and told me to ring for Eliza whenever I wanted her; and then her friends came and took her off in their carriage. *Punch* was an old number which I had seen before, so I rang for Eliza and asked her to give me 'Ivanhoe.' When she had fetched it, she said—

'Please, Master Gerald, do you think mistress would mind if Jim Beard came and sat in the nursery half an hour? He's the young man as I keeps company along of.'

'But I thought he was in prison, having his three months,' said I.

'Oh, but he's just come out of prison,' she said, blushing; 'and he's done so well for hisself there. The chaplain and the governor has nothing to say but good of him; and he's got a character as 'ill take him anywhere. Do you think, sir, as mistress would object to his coming in? He looks that respectable as nobody would believe he had been in jail.'

I thought a little, and finally I said, 'He can come; and I'll take the responsibility on myself, Eliza,' which is what my nurses always say between the doctor's visits.

So Eliza went off very much pleased, and I set to work to read my book. It was a lovely afternoon, the big windows were open on the verandah, and I could smell the jessamine, and hear the thrushes singing. But I didn't heed them much, for 'Ivanhoe' is too interesting to let you heed anything else. I had just got into the middle of the storming of Font de Bocul's castle, when I heard a little noise and looked up. There was a man standing by the silver table, a dirty looking man in a blue shirt, and he was putting things into his pocket. He stuffed the silver cup in, and he was picking up the bracelet and silver candlestick, when I called out, 'Stop, thief!' as loud as ever I could. He did look startled. You see, when I'm lying down, I'm nearly hidden in the rugs and cushions, and nobody would know I was there that didn't expect to see me. The man dropped the candlestick, and popped the bracelet and the christening-mug into his pocket, and he ran off through the open window, leaving his boots behind on the verandah, for I could just see the toes of them where I lay. Then I rang my bell for Eliza. She didn't come at once; I suppose she was having a very interesting conversation with her young man. When she did come, and heard my story, she screamed a good deal, and seemed very unwilling to

fetch a policeman for fear of being murdered by the robbers in the garden. She said she was sure there was a gang of them. She was so silly, that at last I said, 'Eliza, I wish you'd fetch your young man; for as he's been a thief himself, perhaps he might know their ways, and tell us if there is a gang, and, anyhow, he could fetch a policeman.'

'Oh, Jim don't think there's much good in bobbies, Master Gerald,' said she; 'they ain't no match for thieves, *they* ain't.'

But she fetched him, for she didn't want to lose any of his visits; and, at the same time, she didn't want to leave me, for she is faithful, if she hasn't got much sense.

Mr. Jim Beard came in, twirling his hat round and round, and touching the part of his forehead where his hat would have been if it had been on his head. He looked exceedingly awkward; and when I told him to sit down, he balanced himself on the edge of a chair and seemed shyer than ever.

You should always put people at their ease if you can, so I said, 'I'm so glad you've done your three months, Mr. Beard. I hope they didn't give you very stale bread in prison; I shouldn't mind the water so much if it was me, but dry bread is horrid.'

I don't think he heard, for he said, 'Quite well, thank you, sir, and I hope you're the same.'

Eliza poked him, and said, 'Ain't you got no 'eart, you big simple? Can't you *see* as the poor child's a cripple;' and Mr. Jim Beard blushed till he was quite purple, and nearly fell off his chair.

I thought it was no use trying to put him at his ease, so I said, 'I sent for you, Mr. Beard, because we have just had a burglar here, and I thought as you have been one yourself, you know, you might understand about it. I think this is rather a stupid one,' I added, 'because he has left his boots behind.'

Eliza's young man got quite at his ease when he heard about the boots, and he ran and looked at them. He seemed to know them quite well, for he said, 'My eye! if these don't belong to Shambling Sammy! I'll crack his nib for him, the audacious willian. A softy like him agoin' priggin' i' broad daylight i' that fashion.'

Eliza told me afterwards he had made Shambling Sammy's acquaintance coming out of jail, and didn't like him. He instantly said he would go and catch Shambling Sammy, and break every bone in his body, as well as recover the things. I

asked him not to break quite all Sammy's bones, it seemed so bloodthirsty and utterly un-Christian to take private revenge like that; and I said he had much better have a policeman, and let justice take its course properly. However, he didn't stop to listen, and before I had done pacifying Eliza, who vowed the gang would murder him, he was back again, and laid the silver cup and the bracelet and the christening-mug in a MS. on my sofa. They were horribly battered and bent, and looked as if he had been using them as weapons to break Sammy's bones.

He had soon found Shambling Sammy, he said, hiding in the ditch in the turnip field, and there, it seems, they fought. I thought Sammy ought to be put in prison, but Mr. Beard said he had had quite enough of a lesson. I suppose it wouldn't be quite nice after all for an ex-burglar like Mr. Beard to have a hand in putting an acquaintance in prison.

When mother came I told her the whole story and she didn't know quite what to say.

She couldn't send away Eliza for having a burglar young man, because he had turned out so useful, as it happened; and she couldn't scold me for letting him into the house, as it had been my idea to make him useful; and, as she said, it was a good deal her own fault for leaving the silver with the window wide open, and nobody but me. The vicar's wife will be sure to say I ought not to have been left alone. But I like a little of my own company, and you really can't have Eliza about in the drawing-room, for she's not at all a drawing-room person. So mother didn't say much, but sent for nurse to come home again, which I thought a pity. She gave Eliza five shillings, and told her to reward Mr. Beard for his services. Eliza put the five shillings in the savings bank to go towards enough to marry on; but, as she said, it wouldn't go far. Poor Eliza was in very low spirits altogether, and what I told her about compensations didn't comfort her at all. It *is* such a compensation to have Jim Beard catch the burglar, and he never would if he hadn't been in jail, and seen his boots. But all she said was, 'Please, sir, I'd a deal sooner he'd always borne a good character. Them three months comes against him terrible, and the chaplain's good word don't go for nothing.'

When daddy came home he found a place for Mr. Beard at a market gardener's a long way off, who takes discharged prisoners and treats them rather strictly, which daddy and the vicar say

is for their good. Still he has got a place, which is something, and Eliza does rather see the compensation of that. However, she grumbles because it is so far off, and her young man is no scholar and can't write to her very well. Some people never seem able to find the compensations there are, or to make themselves contented. I suppose it is because they haven't philosophic minds.

M. SMITH.

SUNRISE.

PALE streaks of pink along the misty blue,
A yellow haze around the sleeping earth,
The solemn moment of the new day's birth,
The christening of the infant morn with dew.
Soft tears from heaven on the baby's face
Fall as with light caress upon the land;
The sun rays show afresh each dawning grace,
And earth and sky are joining hand in hand;
And moving onwards towards the distant east,
The clouds will part that hover overhead;
Dreams, and the night-desires have swiftly fled,
The strivings after vanished hopes have ceased,
And now to you, who are at length awake,
My path across the little bridge I'll take.

OLIVE MONTAGU WALFORD.

A PRISONER IN JAPAN.

BY S. BALLARD.

A STEEP hill with a grove of feathery bamboos; views which give glimpses of the great city of Tokyo stretching for miles all around me, and beside me a solitary grave. The dead man who has lain there more than a hundred years was the last Japanese who professed Christianity in the old days, when 'even to speak by mistake of these matters invites severe punishment.'

This man was a servant in the prison where Christians were shut up, and the hill is known to-day as the Christian Hill.

When I pass near that hill engaged in mission work, free to come and go and speak of 'these matters' to whom I will, I often think of the last missionary who died in that prison; of his years of preparation for his work; of his suffering and close imprisonment, and of his death, before he had once had the opportunity to make known the gospel he had given up all to preach. And then I look at my comfortable house, the ever-increasing band of Christians throughout the country, and the freedom with which even a woman may travel everywhere and speak of the True Way to all. And I often wonder whether martyred missionaries are ever allowed to look down from another world and see the spread of the gospel for which they suffered so long and sacrificed so much.

The story of the last prisoners for the Christian faith on Christian Hill is an intensely interesting one, both as showing us a remarkably noble character and as giving curious vivid glimpses of a past age.

It was in the early morning of a January day, in 1709, that a Japanese fisherman was startled by meeting on the beach 'a wild man,' who, laying down his sword, made signs that he wanted water.

At that period the laws of Japan with regard to European

intercourse were of the strictest. No ships were to be built in Japan big enough to go to a foreign country; no foreigner was on any account to land, with the exception of a few Dutch; as for Christianity, for which so many hundreds of Japanese had laid down their lives, it was prohibited as a thing too vile to be spoken of.

It was at this period that a Roman priest, the Père Sidotti, resolved to force an entrance into this shut-up country. For six years he made preparations for his hazardous undertaking, and gradually working his way as far as China, he there persuaded a ship to take him across and leave him on the Japanese coast.

On a winter's morning he found himself alone, with no knowledge of the language, the only Christian in the midst of a great teeming population, all of whom were sworn to extirpate the followers of Christ.

His presence created great alarm among the simple country people, who were not sure that they would not be punished for the mere fact of having such a monster among them. He was at once taken to the proper authorities, and after several months' delay, during which time he was examined with the aid of Dutch interpreters, he was taken to the capital, Tokyo, from the far south where he had landed.

What a wonderful journey it must have been! No doubt he met many a daimio with his retinue, going to visit his country estates. Passing by numberless tea-houses, and by thronged temples, as he got nearer to Tokyo, the snowy slopes of Fuji rose on his left, while on the right rolled the great waves of the blue Pacific, and all around were quaint houses and fantastic gardens.

But of the scenes that he passed through he saw nothing; all through the bright sunny days he sat in darkness, for the norimono (or kind of palanquin) in which he sat was closely shut, and orders had been given that every one he met on the road should turn aside and not speak until he was past. And so in darkness and silence he was carried through the Flowery Land.

And what must have been worst of all to bear, was that all the time he had to sit in such a cramped position that he was never again able to walk without help.

I do not gather that all this was done from motives of cruelty or religious persecution. The Japanese Christians of forme times suffered much from the political motives atributed to the

missionaries, and there had been alarming rumours of a Spanish invasion. In Sidotti they thought that they had captured the spy of some great foreign power, and their chief object was to keep him in complete ignorance of the roads and the nature of the country.

On arrival at Tokyo, he was taken to the prison on the Christian Hill, where some Christian captives had already lived and died.

There he met with Arai Hakusei, a Japanese official of great learning and more enlightenment than his contemporaries. This Arai was appointed one of the commissioners instructed to examine Sidotti, and he wrote a minute account of the interviews. This account has been preserved among the Government papers, and published. There is also a translation of parts in the Transactions of the Asiatic Society. Arai's ideas as to European languages were vague. He reports himself as saying to the Dutch interpreters, 'If I look at a map of the world, Italy and Holland are within the same continent of Europe, and not so far separated as Nagasaki and Mustu. Therefore, if we suppose that you speak with the Dutch language to an Italian, seven or eight words out of ten will be understood.' There are many glimpses of the naïve ignorance of the Japanese as to the things of the outer world, but the book interests us more particularly by the way in which it brings out the patient, steadfast character of the man who had so bravely taken his life in his hand in order to preach the gospel. The first interview between the commissioners and Sidotti is thus described by Arai—

'When it was past three o'clock he was called out, and two men, one on each side, kept guard, and he saluted the persons present. They ordered him to sit down, and then the commissioners came to the side of a table. That house faced south, and there was a wooden verandah; the table was placed three feet from the verandah, but I sat a little in the rear. As the Roman had come from a distance in a norimono, he could not walk; therefore even in coming from the prison he came in a kago. Therefore, too, the two men held him up by the armpits. When he had sat down by the table, one horse-soldier and two foot-soldiers were beside him and behind him, and knelt on mats. His height was over six feet; he was taller than ordinary men, his head the shape of a censer, his hair black, his eyes deep set, a high nose, and he wore a brown,

stuffed, small-sleeved, pongee silk robe. This garment he had received from the Lord of Satsuma. Next the skin he wore a white calico shirt. When he sat down he made the ceremony of the sign of some letter with his right hand on his forehead, and afterwards he always did the same. I have written the shape of it at the end of this book.

'Then the commissioners spoke to the Roman through an interpreter. When they did so he made an obeisance and replied. Then the commissioner said that as the weather was very cold they wished to give him a garment; but he would not receive it. The reason was, as I have heard, that he was not allowed by the rules of his religion to receive from any but disciples.

'But since such like as food was necessary to sustain precious life, that he might accomplish the commands of his King, it was quite enough to receive the benevolence of this country by eating its rice. How could he oppose the rule of his religion by receiving clothes? As he is wearing a garment which he received at first in Satsuma, he is not cold, and they must not distress themselves . . . The cause of my coming to Nippon, is to respectfully teach my doctrine, and thus benefit all and save men. But since coming to Nippon, I have caused trouble to many, which distresses my conscience. Since I arrived here, this year has nearly ended. The weather is cold, the climate too is severe, and snow will soon fall. It is truly a source of sorrow, that men, beginning with these Samurai, should have to guard me day and night. I suppose that the reason of thus guarding me is the fear that I may run away. My coming without fear over many thousand miles of wind and waves, is that, at all hazards, I may come and tell the message of my Lord to Nippon. I have come by my own desire; and so I shall certainly not leave and go elsewhere. And though I run away, I could not stay one day in a place unknown, as I am not like the men of this country. But if you are guarding me by the Shogun's orders, it would not be right to be negligent in this. The day-time does not matter, but as the night is truly miserable for these guards, put on manacles and fetters, and place me bound in the prison.

'When the commissioners heard this, they thought it very frightful. I said to them, "I should not have thought him so deceitful," and the prisoners having heard me, seemed to dislike me very much, and said—

'"It would be shameful for any one not to speak the truth; much more since there is a special command of my religion with regard to telling lies. From the time I came to understand the principles of this religion until now, I have not told any untruths."

'I asked him, "In what you said now, did you say the year being nearly over and the climate cold, it is unbearable to see these guards having to keep watch day and night?"

'"Yes," he replied.

'"If so, then I think you spoke deceitfully, because it is considered very important, and is by command of the Government; and since the commissioners have received orders and so commanded you to be guarded, as they are anxious that nothing untoward should happen to you, inasmuch as your clothes are thin, they wished to give you clothes; but you won't receive those garments. If it is as you say, now say why do you cause them such anxiety? If you don't care on account of your religious rule, why is it, at all events, that you don't care on account of those who are in charge of you? Therefore, if what you said now is true, what you said before is a lie. Anyhow, explain to me what is your meaning?"

'He replied, "Since I have heard your words, I think that what I said before was a mistake, therefore I will receive the garments, and set the commissioners' minds at rest. If it is all the same, I humbly wish not to receive silk robes, only cotton ones."'

His imprisonment does not seem at first to have been excessively rigorous, for we are told that he had cut red paper into the form of a cross, and pasted it on the west wall, and was reciting his prayers so as to read them under the cross.

Arai, after a good deal of conversation on other matters, asked him as to the exact reason of his coming, to which Sidotti replied—

'Six years ago I heard that I was to come here as a messenger, and, enduring many thousand miles of land and wave, at last I have arrived at this capital. But, as this day, if I lived in my own land, would be the beginning of the New Year, a time when all men are rejoicing together, I think it truly a joyful thing that to-day, for the first time since I came to Japan, I am asked about my religion.'

But one fears that his heart must have been heavy when he returned to his prison, for his explanation of Christianity was evidently met with scorn.

'When he came to speak about his religion, it appeared to be not in the slightest respect like the true way. Wisdom and folly suddenly became interchanged in him. At first I had thought him very intelligent, but he began to explain his doctrine—he became like a fool—it was just as if one had heard the words of two men.'

Sidotti had, of course, been strictly forbidden to preach his religion; and, indeed, at a time when the laws against Christianity were so severe, it is unlikely that any one would have listened to him. But some seed, which had been sown by the former Christian prisoners, was made to blossom by the sight of Sidotti's patient suffering.

In the days of the former Christian missionaries' imprisonment, a man and a woman, both servants in the prison, had received their teaching. How far they had been instructed one does not know, but the prison authorities were aware that they were tainted with the pernicious doctrine; they were made to marry each other, and were kept as servants in the prison, never being allowed out. Apparently they renounced their faith, and can one wonder? They had no Bible as a source of strength, no one to encourage them, and so no doubt they gradually forgot what they had once known of the sufferings of a Redeemer. Suddenly they were aroused by the unexpected arrival of another teacher of the Way, and they saw the cross which he painted in scarlet on his prison wall. They were old people. Were they at an advanced age to give up their lives and suffer a martyr's death for a teaching of which they had so little knowledge? The Mikado, whom they revered as almost divine; the laws of their country, which all Japanese hold in the greatest reverence;—all held that teaching to be a crime. Yet an inward voice told them that it was the True Way. What struggles must have gone on before they could come to a conclusion. But they confessed their faith. Coming before the commissioners, they said—

'Formerly, when our master was alive, he secretly taught us his doctrine; but we did not know that he acted contrary to the laws of the country when he taught us that doctrine. Now that we have become very old, we have seen how this Roman, not regarding his life for the sake of religion, has come many thousand miles, is captured, and dwelling in prison, and loath as we are to lose the short span of this life, yet, as it is a fearful thing to fall into the soul prison, we have received the doctrine

from him, and become believers. As it would be opposing the goodness of this Government not to confess these things, we confess this much. However it may turn out for us, we ask that we may be dealt with for our crime according to the laws.'

It is a quaint confession, and to us it is difficult to understand why they call it 'a crime' that they are confessing.

They were then separated, and next year, when the Dutch interpreters came to Japan again, there was an examination of Sidotti's crime of reviving their faith.

His imprisonment, which does not seem to have been accompanied by any cruelty or harshness, was completely changed. He was put bound into a damp, dark place.

'Then,' says Arai, 'he showed his real thoughts; raising his voice, he abused the commissioners, called out the names of the old couple, and, strengthening their faith, ceased not day and night advising them to hold steadfast until death.'

In order fully to understand the force of this, one must remember that the walls of a Japanese house are but paper screens, so that Sidotti's raised voice could probably he heard quite well by the old couple. From this imprisonment his earnest spirit was released by death, in October, 1715. Terrible must have been his loneliness, aggravated by the thought that never once during these years had he been able openly to declare the gospel message. Nor had he once received any news of the country to which he belonged. How were they faring in Rome? During these years of silence, did those he loved talk of him, and wonder how he fared? Were they picturing him as holding successful missions, and followed by earnest listeners, the lot he had pictured for himself during his years of preparation, or did they have some presentiment of his fate? Such thoughts as these must have passed through the mind of the lonely man as he lay dying in the prison on Christian Hill.

His death relieved the Japanese of a great difficulty. There had been many discussions as to what to do with him. Some wished to send him back to Europe; some to keep him bound in prison; others thought he should be put to death.

The grave on Christian Hill was long thought to be Sidotti's; but a German savant, who lately made a careful investigation of an old map of the place, kept by the Japanese Government, has shown that it is not Sidotti's, but that of the old man who so bravely confessed his Christianity.

A writer, in speaking of this grave, remarks that there are often fresh flowers on it, and wonders why and how they are there.

I asked an old woman of the neighbourhood if she knew the place, and told her of the Christian prisoners.

Of them she had never heard, nor did she know anything of Christianity; but she knew the spot where the grave is perfectly, and, as a child, had often seen sick people, especially those troubled with a bad cough, go to pray there and offer flowers.

There is much obscurity as to the end of the old couple; but we know that after they passed away no Japanese professed Christianity until the present era, when Japan has passed with a bound from its mediæval civilisation, and the religion, of which 'it was a crime to speak, even by mistake,' is very slowly, but surely, leavening the masses, and will, in time, raise the ideals and give dignity to the character of the Japanese people.

THE MAIN CHANCE.

BY CHRISTABEL R. COLERIDGE, AUTHOR OF 'WAYNFLETE,' 'THE TENDER MERCIES OF THE GOOD,' 'THE PROPHET'S MANTLE,' ETC.

CHAPTER XII.

A LITTLE GOOSE.

JASPER WICKHAM went home from Waynflete with much food for reflection. Guy's revelations had been intensely interesting to him, for more reasons than one.

'He's an odd fish,' he thought; 'one minute you see an ordinary young fellow enough, canny and sly as they all are in these parts, never giving himself away, and watching to see that you don't take him in. You wonder where he got those queer, fetching sort of eyes. Then, in a moment, there's a visionary or a mystic; you think he'll prophesy or go into a trance; but he doesn't. I wish I could get him really to tell me about his "subjective phenomena." If he has a tile loose, he knows it himself. I wonder if he *is* susceptible to will power, or whether he has been too *well vaccinated* for it to take again? One thing I'm sure of, money's tight with him. *How* tight, I wonder? I've a great mind to try an experiment!'

Wickham had reached his lodgings by the time his reflections had arrived at this stage. His supper was on the table, his fire burning—abundant and cheap coal did much to mitigate the gloom and rigour of the Ingleby climate—and on the mantelpiece were two letters—one blue, oblong, and business-like; the other, square, greenish-grey, and directed in a hand which combined pretty flourishes and ill-formed letters.

Wickham opened the blue envelope first, glanced at it, frowned, and muttered impatiently—

'Tight! I wish one *could* sell one's soul for a round sum down! I'd sign the deed in my heart's blood with pleasure! I'd risk slaving in the next world to be a free man in this! There's no such thing as trouble if a man's got enough money!'

What prospect had he of getting any? Perhaps a fee from Guy Waynflete, if he could induce him to think an expert's opinion on his coal seam worth having. Perhaps another from young Mervyn, if he could see his way to finding coal in Ouseley. The two together would be, as he grimly put it, a baby to throw to the wolves.

When a man starts in life under a deep sense of injury and wrong, when he undertakes to carry a burden which he feels never ought to have been laid on his shoulders, he is likely in many cases to feel that he has a score against Fate, and against his fellows, for which he may rightly exact payment.

Jasper Wickham felt that he had more right than other people to any cakes and ale that came in his way; also he meant to get as much as he could out of luckier people. He was of the stuff, too, of which successful speculators are made; he was clever, and caught sight of chances and contingencies. He had a way of getting to know people's secrets and desires. Young Mervyn's were easily guessed; and though Guy Waynflete was somewhat baffling, he would surely be glad to think that his estate could yield something more profitable than damp hay and 'subjective' spooks.

Wickham stood before the fire, thinking hard, and as he thought, he looked up at the drawing over his mantel-shelf.

'By Jove! That is like him, and his family pictures too! Their fiend or ghost must have that face! Inscrutable eyes, doubtful smile; even betting as to whether he's a saint or a villain. I've seen Waynflete look like either. He's nearly as handsome, too, as this old Venetian swell! Queer. Perhaps he's a re-incarnation of him! I shouldn't like to get into that chap's black books!'

He looked intently at the picture for some time, till at length his eyes fell on the second letter, which he took up and opened, rather slowly.

'DEAR MR. WICKHAM,

'I am afraid I have been a very foolish girl, and imprudent. I never, *never* ought to have come out to meet you. Please don't expect me ever to again.

'Yours sincerely,

'K. FIELDING.

'Good-bye.

'KATIE.'

'Ha!' thought the man of experience, with a smile, as to the cynical character of which there was no doubt. 'She thinks I haven't been after her often enough! Now this wants wary walking. She's an awfully sweet little pussy cat when she's good. I can't afford to have a row about the vicarage governess either way. I know Waynflete's young woman suspected us. I think many things about *her*. She's a fair woman *with* discretion and insight, and she's more of a psychic than her lover, though he may see ghosts. She'll have put Katie up to be prudent. I wonder? Girls, I suppose, always talk about their sweethearts to each other. If Katie has made a confidante of *her*, I'm done for!'

Katie had not. She had poured out to Florella all her fears as to her future, her sense of her own shortcomings as a teacher, her wishes to be a better girl, her desire for a wise friend; but she had never given herself away to the extent of telling her friend what she knew in her inmost soul her friend would tell her to give up. What else, indeed, *could* any one do but advise her against it? There are confidences which never are, which never can be given; truths which are never told unless the speaker is prepared to give up the game. If Florella had been a *fellow goose*, she might have learned about Jasper Wickham; but Katie was afraid to tell her, too sure of what she would say, too much afraid of losing her good opinion. It was easy for Katie to post letters, it would have been difficult for her to receive many without notice. Wickham had never written her one. Half a dozen foolish little notes on her side, one or two meetings 'by chance' in the summer evenings, words and glances at other times, this was all.

Katie was miserable. Was he going to drop her without a word? Had he never meant anything but nonsense? The poor little girl could not conceive that he was not a man to know how utterly exceptional in her life her intercourse with him had been, how she had never, *never* even thought of meeting any one else on the sly. And now nothing but a passion that had caught her unawares would have induced her to do so.

Poor Katie! When Florella was really out of reach, she flattered herself that she would have consulted her if she had been near, but that a letter was beyond her courage. She watched and waited, and when weeks passed without a meeting, she wrote the poor little note, which met with such a poor welcome.

'Katie,' said Mrs. Lennox, one afternoon while every minute was still full of the chance of an answer, 'come and have tea with me in the drawing-room to-day. I want to have a little talk with you.'

Katie came with her heart in her mouth, and sat down in a corner behind the banner-screen and furtively watched her hostess making tea.

'Katie, my dear,' said Mrs. Lennox, 'I think we've all felt since we came into this new world that we had been getting a little mossy and rusty in the old one. At any rate, Mr. Lennox and I have more means now to make a few changes. Indeed, I always felt that it was bad for you to try to teach others, when you had had so little teaching yourself. I talked to Miss Vyner, and she told me about a college——'

'Oh no, oh no!' cried Katie, starting up. 'Dont send me away—don't send me away! I—I'd rather be a mother's help, a—a—a housemaid. I'll do all the mending or anything, only don't send me out into the cruel world.'

'My dear child,' said Mrs. Lennox, who was not without a sense of humour, 'I don't want a "help," and you don't understand housework. Don't be a goose. I understand that in this training college for teachers you would find plenty of pleasant companions, and that after a year or two's training you would be able to command a good salary. We are very glad to give you this advantage, and your home in the holidays is here.'

Katie was so much a child of the house, that she hardly realised what a generous offer was being made to her.

'Then you'll have another governess,' she sobbed, 'and she'll sleep in my room.'

'I don't know about that. Perhaps Laura and Lily may go to school. Katie, you must not be so childish; I should say the same to my own daughters. No girl without a provision for the future ought to be content unless she is able to earn her living. Let me tell you——'

Here Mrs. Lennox produced a prospectus and began to enter on details as to the proposed college, which fell on unheeding ears.

Katie sobbed passionately. 'I didn't think you and Miss Vyner would have *talked me over!*'

'Well,' said Mrs. Lennox, 'until you are more reasonable, I don't see that there's anything more to be said.' She put up the papers and held her peace.

Katie sat on the hearthrug and cried. She was really terribly upset; at the same time, there was something of the half unreal posing of youth when it fancies itself in a special character. Katie liked herself as the little shy, home-loving girl, content with little duties, untouched by modern ambitions, clinging to her early friends, too tender to face the world alone. The sort of tales on which Katie had been educated, rather glorified this young person; and besides, deep within her was ingrained the notion that *men liked that sort of girl.* She was sure 'he' would think a training college would spoil her. And she did feel waves of affection rising up within her for every link with her dead and gone home, everything that belonged to the past. She loved even the elderly opossum rug on which she was sitting, and which had been bought at the sale of her parents' effects. She put down her hand, and softly stroked it. Hadn't she hidden her mother's rings in it, and hunted for them, and pushed little cold toes into it to get warm?

'Mr. Mervyn.'

Katie sprang up and fled behind the banner-screen. It was Saturday, when visitors were apt to congregate at the vicarage afternoon tea.

Max Mervyn was extremely well got up in knickerbockers and gaiters, the 'country gentleman' to a T. He looked healthy, cheerful, and patronizing, on the best of terms with the parochial clergy. He had called in to 'offer his mite,' he said, to a coffee tavern which it was proposed, he understood, to open between the collieries and the mills.

'Temperance,' he remarked, 'is such an excellent thing for the masses.'

'Perhaps you'll give us an address at one of our meetings, and tell them so, Mr. Mervyn?' said Mrs. Lennox.

'Well,' said Max, 'there's a great deal in the force of example! We're all bound to set an example. I could point to myself. Where should I have been, if I'd taken a nip there and a pick-me-up here, at every turn? Keep your money in your pocket till you see a chance of turning it over, *I* say.'

Here two parochial ladies came in, one young and anxious to adore Mrs. Lennox; the other elderly and with a grievance, which began—

'It has never been usual here——' and referred to some question of Sunday school management.

As Mrs. Lennox became absorbed in the flood of this lady's reminiscences, Max turned round to Miss Fielding.

'Well, Katie,' he said, cheerfully; 'and how are you?'

'Oh, very well,' said Katie, nervously, and with a catch in her breath.

'I say, you've been crying,' said Max, in an undertone as dictatorial and inquisitive as it might have been ten years ago in the garden at Baywood.

'Oh, Max, you know I always was a cry-baby.'

'Has *she*,' looking at Mrs. Lennox and speaking savagely, 'been making you cry?'

'Oh no, she didn't mean it! It's only—dear old Max, you would understand if I told you—only it's a hard world when one's turned out of the nest!'

'I think you ought to tell me all about it. You never had any common sense,' said Max, severely; and oh, what balm his familiar, hectoring tones dropped into Katie's sore heart!

She was beginning to speak when the door opened, and the vicar and some one else came in. Katie's words died on her lips, her wondering eyes fixed themselves, her colour fled, then came back with a rush as the vicar said genially—

'Mr. Wickham, my dear. Have you a cup of tea for us?'

'Is that it?' said Max, savagely, and turning crimson as he followed Katie's eyes. 'Has that fellow been up to anything? I'll call him to order.'

'Be quiet, Max! Hold your tongue—you know nothing about anything!'

'Then why do you look——'

To quarrel in a whisper behind a banner-screen, with several people all talking on the hearth-rug, is difficult. Katie whisked the screen out of the way, and revealed her existence by jumping up to hand the tea-cups, cheeks glowing, eyes dancing, not a trace of trouble left.

'The dickens!' ejaculated Max, in suppressed fury; but he had to stand up too, as Wickham said imperturbably—

'Ha, Mervyn, how d'ye do? I've been up in your neighbourhood.'

Then there followed what seemed to Katie a babel of incongruous chatter.

The coffee tavern—Mr. Raby's subscription to it—Mr. Waynflete's rather baffling opinion that the fewer names, subscriptions, and meetings that appeared in public the better. Ingleby folk

liked to find out things for themselves. No, he wouldn't recommend it to his people—sure method of making them stay away. So he had told the vicar. Then the lady with the grievance, the rectification of which she felt to be more important than the coffee tavern. Max Mervyn remarking loudly and cheerfully that if the local gentlemen were backward and slow, perhaps a little new blood was wanted—he quite agreed with the vicar. Then through it all, as a tea-cup was passed, one glance and five words—'Don't be a little goose.'

Oh, how different the same words may be in a different accent. When *he* called her a goose, it meant—oh! that he understood, and that there was nothing to be afraid of. She knew it was as good as if he had said, 'I love you.'

She would pluck up heart about the college; very likely she would never have to go there.

She was quite brisk and self-possessed, and said good-bye quite composedly, when the two gentlemen went off together, and the vicar remained to investigate the Sunday school grievance.

She had quite forgotten Max's sudden displeasure.

CHAPTER XIII.

PRINCE FORTUNATUS.

CUTHBERT STAUNTON had arrived at Ingleby. He had unpacked his books and manuscripts, and established them in drawers and shelves which were his own by prescriptive right. He sat in the chair which he best liked by the blazing fire, which he had often declared was the only set-off against Ingleby frost and fog. His tastes, which, though modest, were a little fanciful, had been carefully remembered and consulted by Guy's old housekeeper in the dinner just eaten. He looked thoroughly comfortable and at home. Rawdie slapped his tail on the floor in hospitable greeting whenever this welcome guest cast a glance at him; and Rawdie's master sat on the opposite side of the fire with a wistful pleasure in his peculiar eyes, that showed a similar sense of well-being.

'This is jolly!' he said emphatically.

If it is true that we make friends with people because each one helps us to express some outlying fact of our own nature,

the active agent in this old and great friendship should have been Guy. There were tracts of undiscovered country in his soul, where from some quiet hollow came a response to his friend's critical taste and literary culture. He had more to say about Spenser and his ideals than Staunton had about trade or agriculture; while as for 'occultism' in all its branches, by nature Cuthbert regarded it with gentle but cynical incredulity. The existence of Guy, however, discounted some of Cuthbert's opinions. He did not square with them. But whether from old habit or as a reward for much past kindness, his company offered sufficient attraction to tempt a man who liked to divide his time between Italy and London, down to Ingleby in the winter.

He supposed that it would be his last visit to Guy as a bachelor, but he did not expect to feel less at home at the Mill House when Florella reigned there than he felt now.

'And you have, of course, heard from Hyères?' he said.

'Oh yes,' answered Guy. 'They are very comfortably settled, and Florella says that she is "seeing the difference in things." She says if tropical light and shadow is as different from southern French as French is from what we have in Ingleby, there is nothing for her to do but go off in a P. and O. vessel as far as it will take her and *look*.'

'An excellent idea for a wedding tour,' said Cuthbert.

Guy laughed, sighed, and shook his head.

'I think she's happy,' he said, tenderly and simply. 'Colours and lights, and the way things grow, do make her happy somehow.'

'She was very much pleased by her commission from Grey and Alder's,' said Cuthbert, 'for that children's Christmas book. She said that she meant to make delightful studies of all the creatures children were inclined to torment—moles and mice, and hairy caterpillars. I asked her if she drew the line at black beetles, and she said that she was afraid the publishers might. They have offered a good price.'

Guy laughed again, but looked less delighted. In some ways he was fanciful and fantastic. He would have liked to think that Florella need never care for a good price after her marriage, nor seek to sell a drawing. He had, however, been tutored into knowing that this sentiment would be scouted by Florella herself, and by her friends, so he suppressed it. He must make better bargains himself before he could object to his betrothed making a good one.

'And how are all the new elements?' said Cuthbert. 'Ingleby won't seem like itself, with enlightened clergy and intelligent and cultured engineers about?'

'I've asked Wickham up to-morrow,' said Guy. 'If you find I'm not so rusty as usual it's owing to him. We are to dine next week with the enlightened vicar.'

'And how's young Mervyn?'

'He has got a very good head for business. I think he really is the sort of chap who might roll up the proverbial half-crown into a fortune.'

'With the help of rich uncles.'

'Yes. But Mervyn knows exactly what he wants. He won't fritter away his money, and I don't think he'll be fooled out of it. He thinks he knows everything; but then, like Prince Prigio, he often does.'

'He makes me curl up,' said Cuthbert.

'Eh!' said Guy, 'you're too fine in your notions! There's a lot of rough work in the world, and Mervyn's cut out to do some of it. Hallo!'—as Rawdie pricked up his ears, and a voice sounded loud and cheerful in the hall—'Hallo! That's himself, I believe!'

'One minute, to see Mr. Waynflete on most important business,' sounded in Max's voice, as the room door opened, and the young man appeared, well wrapped up from the cold, rosy and fresh, with his bright eyes unconsciously eager.

'Well, Mervyn, here's your cousin! Take your coat off,' said Guy.

'I've come up to tell you something,' said Max, undoing his coat, and pausing with his scarf in his hand. 'How d'ye do?' to Cuthbert. 'It's all right, as you're one of the family. Mr. Waynflete, I'm a much richer man than I thought I was.'

'Really?' said Guy. 'How's that?'

'It's this way. Uncle Robert had a lot of shares in an American Company for transporting frozen meat. It was a new system, and he'd only just got them, and when he died the Company hadn't begun to work. The shares weren't counted in the sum that came to me. But there's a regular boom of the concern. They've gone up like sky-rockets; and to-day I've an offer for them, treble and more than treble what the old chap gave. I've been watching the market. I said nothing while I wasn't sure. But it's enough to make a good

bit of difference as to the size of the concern I could embark in. Look here.'

He showed Guy some papers, while his kinsman offered congratulations.

'Good business, isn't it?' said Max, rubbing his hands.

'Yes,' said Guy. 'Old Bob Palmer rarely made a mistake. I should realise, I think, in your place; but that's for you to consider.'

'Yes; I don't hold with risks,' said Max. 'Well, I'm off. I've got those accounts you gave me to finish. Meet you at the vicarage on Tuesday.'

When he was gone Guy stood silent for a minute. Then he said—

'He means to work the coal in Ouseley. He'll form a company, and take a large proportion of shares.'

'How do you know?' said Cuthbert, as Guy gave this information, in a tone of matter-of-fact certainty. Guy looked a little abashed by the question.

'I think he will,' he said, with more reserve.

'And is there coal in those regions?'

'That,' said Guy, 'will be for an expert to say.'

He paused a moment, then added, 'He'll want to do what old Attorney Maxwell failed to do, make himself a place in the neighbourhood.'

'Build a big house on his place, do you mean, and live there?' said Cuthbert.

'Well, no,' said Guy, slowly; 'I don't know that he'll want to do that exactly. *He'll buy Waynflete Hall.*'

Guy did not say these last words aloud, but they said themselves within him, clear, definite, and sure.

'Well, I always want to punch his head,' said the tolerant Cuthbert. 'Your county folk must have liberal minds if they accept him.'

'We haven't many county folk in these parts,' said Guy; 'and he's the sort to get what he wants.'

Cuthbert was inclined to look more favourably on Jasper Wickham as an element in Ingleby life. He found him civil and agreeable.

The coal seams in the Ouseley district were mentioned lightly and tentatively.

Guy said, dryly, that Mervyn would find seeking for them an easy method of getting rid of his money. And Wickham

narrated a transaction which had come before him elsewhere, in which land, apparently worthless, had been sold for a good sum on the strength of its coal seams.

'You'll perhaps find fine black coal, thick and level as it's made, under your plantations,' he said.

Guy flashed a glance at him.

'That's a dream,' he said with intention. 'But Staunton doesn't care about geology or speculation. I want you to show him your autotypes; I dare say he has seen the originals.'

'Cultivated kind of man,' said Cuthbert afterwards. 'Is he good in his own line?'

'Yes; he holds first-class certificates. Mervyn would be quite justified in going by his opinion.—Hallo, Rawdie!' he added, as the little beast came out of a remote corner, and wagged an appealing tail. 'Crawled out of your hole?—He hates Wickham; never will speak to him.'

'That looks bad.'

'Florella has her doubts of him also.'

'That's worse. What's the worth of a man's observation against the instinct of dog—or woman?'

'H'm!' said Guy. 'They don't monopolize instinct, which is a search-light, not a sign-post.'

Cuthbert's observation enabled him to perceive that Guy was preoccupied and absorbed with much of which he did not speak. This might be owing to the state of his affairs, he seemed hardly ever to have a leisure moment. He was active and well; but there was a sense of tension about him, a look in his face now and then, which recalled days of struggle which Cuthbert could not forget, though there was never a sign that Guy remembered them.

There was certainly more external variety in his life than of old, and Cuthbert grumbled at being taken out to dinner.

'You can observe,' said Guy, 'and see how your observations tally with Rawdie's instincts.'

There was plenty of conversation, and it amused Staunton to see Max Mervyn trying to hold his own in it, visibly feeling himself a person of importance who ought to have views, and to have them recognised. He saw that Jasper Wickham held his own without effort, and he saw too that Miss Fielding, who sat opposite to him, was an uncommonly pretty girl. She wore a dress with immense white sleeves, which gave her the look

of a little soft-winged, soft-eyed, child angel—a wistful angel certainly, not quite sure of its way back to Paradise.

The Ingleby ladies were of a solid and substantial make, and Mrs. Lennox was brown and keen, with no claim to beauty. Little Katie was unique. Guy smiled, and spoke softly to her, and thought that she would have made a study for Florella. Max, who sat by her, found himself telling her all his hopes and prospects, and felt hot with annoyance because her eyes wandered, and her imperfect self-control failed to hide that she was listening to Wickham, who was talking about bicycles to Miss Greenaway, whose father was a mill-owner in a very large way, and who never recognised Katie as a fellow-girl at all.

And Wickham? He had never before seen Katie full dressed, and he felt her beauty more than he had thought for. How imprudent those wistful, appealing eyes were, and how sweet! He dared not respond. Not for the world would he have had Max Mervyn guess just then that he had given Katie a right to appeal to him. He went on making plans with Miss Greenaway for a bicycle 'gymkhana' next summer at Rilston. The burning pink on Katie's soft cheeks faded. For a moment her eyes swam.

'*Little fool!* She's capable of anything!' thought Wickham, savagely; but even a little fool will turn at last, and Katie's anger at his attention to Miss Greenaway scorched up her tears. She turned round to Max, and looked and listened, till that honest if self-regarding youth began to feel thrills and quivers all over him.

After dinner there was music. Katie sang a Scotch ballad. She mispronounced the Scotch, and fell short of the notes, so that Mrs. Lennox winced, and Wickham forgot how pretty she had looked at dinner; but Max thought to himself that it was jolly touching and simple, and afterwards informed the audience in a hearty voice that he was a Rover bold, a song which, as he said, 'always took.'

Guy sang. He was as musical as a north countryman ought to be, and of late Florella had made him give his really fine voice some training.

He sang 'The Sands of Dee' to its first old setting, and as he sang, the crawling foam and the lonely sands, the dread and the loss and the pity of it, rose up before his hearers. A less dramatic person than Guy in daily life it would have been hard to find, but the music let some power loose within him.

'Why do you sing so seldom, Guy?' said Cuthbert, afterwards. 'You're very effective; you made one feel wet, briny, and desolate.'

'I don't think I like giving myself away,' said Guy.

After his working hours on the next day it occurred to him that he wanted a book from Wickham, and he went round by his house to fetch it before he came in from the mill.

Wickham received him as usual, produced the book, which was a volume of brand-new poems on which Staunton's opinion was desired. Guy, as he turned to go, said suddenly—

'And so you are still thinking about the coal?'

'Yes,' said Wickham. 'Look here! Keep it quiet, though.' He opened a drawer, and took out a rough plan of the Over Flete and Ouseley districts, showing where he thought the coal seams lay.

'I find that more than one person has a notion that a company could be got together to work the coal on a large scale. Of course the landowners could, if they liked, sell their land and their mining rights, or could have shares assigned to them. Young Mervyn would be entitled to some shares, of course, and would probably buy others. I'll not name other names at present, though I could.'

'But suppose the coal, as we have already concluded, is worth very little?'

'Oh, of course,' said Wickham, 'the whole scheme would depend on my report after making investigation, or on that of any other expert people might choose to employ. But if the thing's started, there's money in it.'

'I wish,' said Guy, with a sort of suppressed wistfulness in his tone, 'that there *was* a thick, black, level coal-seam at Flete Head.'

'See if I can find one for you,' said Wickham; 'and let me make a bargain for you. A good deal depends on seizing the right moment to realise these matters. But keep it all dark just now. You'll be "approached" from other quarters.'

A great light came into Guy's eyes, and a change passed over his face. He took his book, and, saying good night, went home. When Cuthbert came downstairs before dinner, he was sitting at the piano playing, and presently began to sing, 'Oh, that we two were Maying,' with a passion and an *abandon* that filled the room with the yearning and the sorrow of the song. Back upon his hearer's mind came the memory of his own early love,

lost long ago on the eve of marriage. It seemed to him as if the strong appeal must call Florella herself to her lover's side; but that, if she came, it would be but for the semblance of a dream.

> 'Oh, that we two lay sleeping
> In our nest in the churchyard sod,
> With our limbs at rest on the quiet earth's breast,
> And our souls at home with God!'

'What is the matter with you?' said Cuthbert, testily. 'You're not usually so infernally impressive—just before a man's dinner, too.'

'Is dinner ready?' said Guy, getting up and shutting the piano. 'Come along, then.'

'If you will sing with all that confounded intensity,' Cuthbert went on, as he followed him, 'you should render your author's meaning right. Kingsley and Hullah both convey certain *rest* in that last line. You've no business to read into it *fin-de-siècle* pessimism and cynical doubt. All that belongs to what young preachers call "this nineteenth century of ours," by which they mean the last few years of it. You're blaspheming and profaning the fine old song.'

Guy stared at him for a moment. 'I dare say,' he said, 'I never sang it so before. Have some fish, won't you?'

But there was an odd glitter in his eyes, and a queer smile on his lips, and Cuthbert thought to himself, 'I don't like it!'

CHAPTER XIV.

COCKSURE.

DINNER was over. Cuthbert Staunton, with the result of a good day's work, in the shape of some neatly and carefully-written MSS. beside him, was smoking leisurely. Guy sat opposite to him. He was doing nothing, but as his friend watched him, he became conscious that there was no real rest in this apparent inaction, that Guy was not 'letting himself go,' leaving himself open to any influences of an idle hour. His peculiar eyes were wide open; he was manifestly on guard, 'like Rawdie with his ears up,' Staunton thought, as he glanced at the little beast on the hearthrug, who lifted his head and gazed wistfully at his master.

Suddenly Guy caught his friend's eye, and laughed not quite pleasantly.

'You say,' he said abruptly, 'that I brought doubt into the rendering of that song just now. It's not *doubt* that I've gained from past experiences.'

'What is it, then?' said Cuthbert, quietly. It was his principle to treat any reference to Guy's 'experiences' with matter-of-course composure.

'Certainty,' said Guy; 'the certainty that I am a living soul; that other souls are so also, and that there are forces akin to us beyond and about us; and that the good force is strong—enough. I know this, not exactly on the evidence of my senses, for I don't refer to any external phenomena, but on the evidence of my experience. If that's not a fact, I wouldn't swear that anything else was!'

'That's a very big thing to say, Guy,' said Cuthbert, gravely, 'and a conviction worth getting.'

'It is a big thing to say,' said Guy. 'Life would be much easier from the materialistic standpoint.'

'Well,' said Cuthbert, in the tone that men use when the thoughts of silence rise at length to their lips, 'I don't presume to speak from personal experience; but I should be loath not to think that if holy souls do "experience religion," it is a comforting and a blessed thing.'

'It is,' said Guy; 'but you don't know how awful it is.'

He spoke exactly as if he had referred to some experience on a snow-clad height in which his friend had not shared. 'It's impossible to give in,' he continued, 'when I know I *can* conquer.'

'But,' said Cuthbert, 'that faith is generally supposed to make everything easy and happy.'

'It didn't,' said Guy, 'in the case of Jesus Christ.'

There was a silence, then Cuthbert said sharply, 'What's the upshot of all this just now?'

'The upshot of it is,' said Guy, 'that another man may think he is beaten, and run away. I know that I shall never have the rest of defeat.'

'I suppose you mean to say,' said Cuthbert, with irritation, 'that that dashed fiend has turned up again? I thought so! You want a tonic and a thorough change at once!'

Guy laughed a little, and seemed to get himself in hand.

'Don't you be afraid,' he said; 'I shan't have fainting fits or

palpitations—those came from sheer fright. Nor shall I see visions nor dream dreams—or, if I do, it won't matter; but—look here, old fellow, won't you put up with being told about it?'

'Of course I will,' said Cuthbert. 'You're bound to tell me.'

'I think,' said Guy, 'that it's better for me to tell you, and though I don't expect you to believe me, you will, I know, respect my belief. Like to feel my pulse first?'

He held out a cool, firm hand, which Cuthbert gripped for a moment.

'All right,' he said. 'Go on.'

Guy stood up, leaning against the mantelpiece.

'Well,' he said, 'the fiend, as you call him, *has* turned up; I have slowly become aware of him. He used, you know, to put in an appearance occasionally, and then there were manifestations, followed by bogies—hallucinations. There'll be nothing of that sort now, but I shall have to—experience him, and he's come to stay.'

'How?' said Cuthbert.

'When, as they say, I "thrawed 'un in t'watter," when the whole thing was over, two years ago, I had but one wish—to forget it all. Oh, the comfort of the normal world, the relief of doing "as others use"! I'd have been well content to live in the body! But one can't shirk spiritual certainty. Shirking is fear, that spells ruin. There are practical problems, quite mundane ones, I assure you, which drag into the battle every spiritual force within one. The battle *is* to the strong. And those others who went under—if I live, so do they—so does he, that Guy whose face I have, and whose soul—oh, well, put it in terms of heredity and evolution if you like, but I can't save or lose my soul—myself alone. His is bound up with it. I *know* that if I can endure to the end we shall be saved. But that other Being entwined with ours, pulls the other way.'

Guy's manner, though intensely earnest, had grown quieter and more controlled as he went on, and now he changed his tone.

'Don't you remember that thing of Stevenson's, where he describes his consciousness of "the other fellow," within himself, with whom he had to struggle? That's the notion, and my "other fellow" is very bad company indeed.'

'Well, but look here,' said Cuthbert. 'You often draw with much keenness the distinction between the real and the

phenomenal. How can you be so cocksure in which category to place your "other fellow"?'

'I am cocksure of a reality at the back of experiences which may possibly, as you say, be only subjective — peculiar to myself.'

'And, as for the soul of your ancestor, don't you from this spiritual standpoint consider him to be redeemed already?'

'I haven't had all theology explained to me like Dante,' said Guy. 'But I may have to help him to accept redemption. I'm aware of him, and the battle is the same, and not won yet.'

'I suppose,' said Cuthbert, after another silence, 'that Florella understands these experiences of yours?'

'No. She does not. That is why I have told you about them. She knew, of course, the external story; but no details of that. She'—here he lowered his voice—'she put out her sweet soul to help me, but she never came in contact with anything but me. God helping me, she never shall!'

'She has, perhaps, the temperament——'

'Oh, she has—she has! It was all I could do, too, to keep Godfrey from it. But you'll never be affected by it.'

He turned and leant his arms on the mantelpiece so that Cuthbert could not see his face.

'So you see,' he went on, 'she—being what she is—must not, while this presence lasts, come near enough to me to know it too. She is away—that is well—and she must not be told nor allowed to guess. It is—well—that for other reasons I could not marry just now.'

Then Staunton lost patience and jumped up. He told Guy that he was overworked and off his head, and had better throw everything up and go off to Hyères at once. What were his ancestors or his fiend, or his spiritual experiences, compared to his duty to his girl—the best girl that ever lived?

'It's just another instance of the mischief worked by fanatic conviction. Stick to common sense and flesh and blood.'

'I've just told you that that point of view is attractive, and you seemed surprised. Won't you stand it, after all?' He turned round as he spoke, and gave his friend a wistful, piteous look, as if he felt an expected support failing him.

'Of course I shall stand it, but it's infernal folly. You're as mad as a hatter.'

'I really don't think I am,' said Guy, thoughtfully.

'Of course your having told me shows some remains of sanity.

I've done. I never could make you hear reason. Talk of the devil—whenever you feel like it. I don't profess to understand it all.'

'That doesn't matter,' said Guy. 'Don't speculate; but if you hadn't been here, I should have asked you to come.'

'Of course you would,' said Cuthbert, still testily.

He had long ago—when Guy was a mere boy, broken in health and nerves, and with his present provokingly cocksure convictions in a state of chaos—made up his mind that he could not guide him through his strange experiences. He could only stand steady beside him. But things took a more practical turn now. There was some one else concerned, whose welfare was of supreme importance. Perhaps Guy read his thoughts, for he suddenly looked at him.

'Yes,' he said. 'If I'm as "mad as a hatter," you would keep her away, and *I* shall not let her run into bad company.'

'D—— it all!' said Cuthbert, savagely.

'Done already,' said Guy, shrugging his shoulders.

Cuthbert recovered his self-control and set himself to await events, and in the mean while to do what he could for Guy's benefit. This was not much. Guy was exceedingly busy, and in his short intervals of leisure was usually quiet and gentle, taking up his friend's interests and keeping silence as to his own. He had long interviews with Wickham, which, he said briefly, were 'on business,' and when all three men were together 'occult' subjects were never touched upon.

Staunton was certain that he wrote to Florella briefly and with pain. He never read her letters till he was alone, though he occasionally spoke of her in an ordinary fashion, or what he meant for such. Staunton knew her quite well enough to be sure that if a hint of the state of affairs was conveyed to her, she would not be passive in the matter. He felt sure that Guy did not dare even to think of her. Sometimes he fancied that her letters were scarcely read. And it was most significant that her photograph was put away. Her sweet, steadfast, happy eyes no longer met her lover's as he sat at his daily work. Staunton did not dare to make any comment. Guy grew lean and worn, and looked dead tired, but he got through an amazing amount of work of one kind and another, and never allowed that he was overdone.

He would go out again after dinner, merely saying that 'he had people to go and see.' Once or twice he did not come back

till twelve o'clock. When at home he was generally silent and absent, but now and then a kind of excitement came upon him and he would talk brilliantly and perversely, playing devil's advocate in every region of faith and morals, contradicting his own practice, as Staunton well knew, on every point.

'You won't sleep?' he said to him once, after one of these discussions.

'Oh yes—I shall, quite as much as I—wish,' said Guy.

'Get bad dreams?'

'Oh no,' he said; 'oh no.'

His voice and face changed, and Cuthbert almost thought that there were tears glittering in his eyes. What did it all mean?

CHAPTER XV.

MOLLY EDGELL'S RELATIONS.

FLORELLA VYNER sat one sunny morning in the hotel gardens at Hyères. It was characteristic of her, as Molly Edgell had once said, that she could 'do nothing' thoroughly. To-day she had neither book nor drawing-block, but sat quite still with her hands on her lap and her eyes fixed on the prospect before her. She was thinking about her lover—a very obvious excuse for absence of visible occupation in an engaged maiden.

Guy was not a good correspondent. Florella's sister Constance, who was a damsel with a sharp wit and a sharper tongue, had once said of his brother Godfrey, that his only notion of a letter was to write '*darling*,' with four dashes, and then say how many birds he had shot yesterday. Guy was less dependent on dashes to express feeling, and communicated facts of more various kinds; but he was hardly more given to put himself into his letters, and Florella was often left to instinct, insight—she hardly knew to what—to judge how it really was with him.

How was it just now? His letters were even shorter and less expressive than usual. That Cuthbert Staunton was with him, 'as good a sort as ever;' that Max Mervyn, 'lucky young dog,' had come into some more money; that Wickham had got coal on the brain, and fancied it everywhere where nobody had ever believed it was; that he was awfully busy, and that times did not mend, hardly formed a record of his inner life. As for the bad times, she had no delusions on that score, and in her secret

heart had faced possibilities from the thought of which Guy still shrank. Florella was accustomed to watch her thoughts, and she found herself thinking often and suddenly of him, whom long ago she had called 'Guy in the picture,' seeing him in insistent mental visions. Was that because her own Guy had casually mentioned that he had shown Waynflete to Wickham, and that they had talked about the chances of coal?

Then there was the other view of Ingleby life, which she received in Katie Fielding's much longer letters. Katie wrote four sheets to Guy's one, but Florella did not derive much more information from these epistles, except, she hardly knew how, confirmation of her feelings that Mr. Wickham was a dangerous friend. Florella never pretended to herself that she was not anxious when she was so. She owned to herself that she feared for Guy, and with strong yearning, with direct and simple impulse, she prayed that she might know what help he needed.

'Florella! You look just as I wanted to see you look!'

Florella started and sprang up. There stood a young woman in a shabby and dusty tweed suit, a felt hat, and spectacles.

'Why, Molly! Molly! How did you come here?'

'A commission to do some papers on Health Resorts for *The Coming Girl;* also an uncle and aunt, who have lived here for some time in an extremely small way. My Flo! how fresh you look, and how settled! How unlike the British tourist!'

'But have you only just come from the station?' said Florella, as Miss Edgell sat down on the bench near her and pulled off her shabby gloves.

'No; last night. I came out to look round and to look you up. How clean you look!'

'You might have managed to brush your coat and hat,' said Florella, who exercised a needed supervision over Molly's appearance.

'I might. But it is so impossible to brush up poor old uncle, that I never thought of it!'

'You never told me that you had an uncle. What is his name? Why does he live out here?'

'Well—his name is Randall. It's a long story, and not a very pretty one. He lives in a slummy French part of the town. Perhaps Mrs. Palmer won't like you to go there.'

'Why? You know Aunt Conny never worries about things.'

'No? what a blessed quality! That's why you look so soft

and plump and peaceful. You'll be fat when you're forty, Florella, and lovely all the same.'

'I dare say I shall be fat,' said Florella. 'All my aunts are. But now, won't you stay to luncheon? Come in with me and I'll brush you up.'

'Yes,' said Molly, with a sort of downright and desperate air that was rather appalling. 'I've come on purpose to tell you a lot of things that you don't know about me.'

'Have you got a new philosophy, or anything of that sort?' said Florella, leading the way into the hotel and up to her pleasant, sunny bedroom, where she proceeded to set Miss Edgell to rights, brushing and stitching, and finally sitting down to mend her gloves for her.

'In the first place,' said Molly, watching her fingers, 'I'm out of work. That horrid *Fin-de-Siècle* has smashed up, and never paid me for my last monthly.'

'How shameful! I never did think much of them!'

'It *was* a shame—so of course I was very glad of this job out here. Now, Florella, are you prepared to confess me? because I've come all the way straight out here to make my confession; and if I don't do it now, I shan't do it at all.'

'Yes; I've always known I didn't know all about you, Molly; and you know I am safe.'

'Yes, of course it is all under seal of confession. Well, my aunt and uncle brought me up. He was in business, and there was a smash—a very bad smash—and they disappeared. I went to school to make myself useful, like Becky Sharp—only nobody ill-used me. I was eighteen, and much too clever for the place. However, I got on, and as soon as I was old enough I went out as governess. Well, the son of the house did tie letters round the schoolroom cat's neck, and it was rather Beckyish—a long way after, certainly—altogether.'

'Did you like him?' asked Florella.

'Oh no! And his aunt found one of the notes, and took me and talked to me like a mother. People are much better and kinder than they used to be, if old novels say true. But you know I hadn't been well brought up. My uncle and aunt were kind to me, but it wasn't a nice house; and my cousin, four or five years older than I, wasn't well brought up either. I knew a great deal more about him than was good for me to know. He made up to me on and off—and didn't I worship him? Did you guess that I had a "past," Floy?'

'Well, yes,' said Florella, 'I knew you had—silences.'

'The past was mostly on my side. I dare say he did not know I really cared, but I kept all his secrets, and hid all his scrapes, and let him tell me all sorts of things. And as for opinions—none of them had a shred of belief in anything, human or divine, and he didn't leave me any. I was awfully proud of keeping up to date with him. Certainly he was very clever, and he taught me a great deal about art, and made me read poetry—or, at least, I took to it to please him. Well, then came the smash up of uncle's affairs—a very bad smash, as I told you—and he hid somewhere. Jem went off, and wrote to say that he would never see his father again, but that a hundred a-year would be paid to him through a certain banker, and there'd be no prosecution. And we never have heard of him from that day to this. It was more than eight years ago.'

'It sounds rather hard,' said Florella, thoughtfully.

'Hard as nails. Poor old uncle was very fond of him, and frets miserably at the want of him. Well, he pays a hundred a-year as the price of freedom from all of us. Sometimes it's a bit unpunctual—there's a delay just now—but it comes. It's not much for two old folks, anyhow.'

Florella guessed how the little pittance was often supplemented.

'What was your cousin?' she said. 'Was he in business too?'

'Oh, well,' returned Molly, 'perhaps I'd better not say. I can't think how he has managed; he was in debt himself, too. If I don't get a regular berth soon somewhere, I shall have to take to teaching again; and I don't think I'm suited for a governess, do you?'

'No, I don't,' said Florella, smiling. 'Poor Molly! It's very hard; because, of course, you can't feel separate from the friends who brought you up.'

'Jim has separated himself pretty effectually,' said Molly, dryly.

'You say,' said Florella, after a pause, 'that he wrote to tell his father that the prosecution would be stopped. Do you think that he undertook anything more—more than the hundred a-year to stop it?'

'How could he—how could he? A boy just beginning life! But if he did—that would have been fine of him?' said Molly, eager and scarlet.

'Yes; it would.'

'Florella! that's just like you, to see below all the sin and

shame, and drag out the soul of good in things evil. If I thought that! But now we come to the heart of the matter.'

She threw herself down by Florella's side, and leant against her knees.

'That is why I say you ought to follow your own heart, to cultivate your own faculties. I wanted so desperately to know where he was, that I went the other day to a *clairvoyante* and asked her.'

'And did she know?'

'Well, she described Jim in a way; but I think he can't be alive, for she talked of blackness and darkness, and the earth above his head. I don't know what I told her. But that's why I came here. Flo, *do* try to find out. Try anything—crystals, writing—I am sure you can. You believe in it! Even Jim believed in some sort of possibility of that sort. But there's not a trace of it in me.'

'I don't think it's trustworthy, Molly. It might be coloured by your thoughts and my thoughts. And it would do you no good, because you would not *really* trust it. You would remain as uncertain as you are now.'

Molly could not deny this. 'But,' she said, '*you* believe that there is something on the other side. You're sure there is?'

'Yes.'

'Well, then, one might get a hint. Certainly all the descriptions of the other places that they give now are a great deal more reasonable and less ridiculous than the old ones. Don't you believe in any of it? They seem certain—the spiritualists and theosophists. How do they know?'

'Why do you think the new ideas are more reasonable?' said Florella.

'Oh, well,' said Molly, 'one can imagine one's self in a sphere of work and purification, and in being like one's self, better than in a golden city, and pearl gates, and wings.'

'Yes,' said Florella, 'one can imagine one's self.' She spoke slowly, as if the thought for which each word stood came slowly too.

'It's all imagination, no doubt,' said Molly, with passion.

'In that city,' said Florella, 'there shall be no need of the sun, for the Lamb is the light thereof. That is spiritual. I like the old symbols best, and ether is not a bit more spiritual than gold—it's only thinner.'

Molly laughed bitterly enough. 'Then we don't know any more about it than we did before.'

'No, we can't,' said Florella, earnestly. 'Our hearts can't conceive it. We conceive something suited to the present day. Guy says that it is impossible to get "back of the Bible" in matters of spiritual experience—it's always right.'

'One for the Bible, if Guy vouches for it,' said Molly. 'Ah, well, if there's no help anywhere, one may as well sit still.'

'I don't think so, and you don't,' said Florella. 'If I thought I had no one to help me, I would do all I could by myself, so would you. It is very difficult to think such deep thoughts, Molly. I do not know about *clairvoyance*, but I am quite sure that loving people helps them, and I do love you; I can try to bring love to you. I will think, and you must think, and perhaps right thoughts will come.'

Florella was pale, and her eyes were full of tears. She was evidently stretching her powers.

'I suppose you don't say, "I'll pray for you," because you think I shouldn't believe it was any good,' said Molly, with sudden hardness.

'No,' said Florella, simply; 'but what I mean by thinking is the same thing as praying and loving.'

Molly flung her arms round her and hugged her. 'Well, I believe in you,' she said. 'Will you come and see the old people? And you will not tell any one the story?'

'Of course not; and of course I will come—that's very simple. There's the bell. Come and see Aunt Conny, and come down to luncheon; you're tidy now.'

'You'll leave a lot of widowers, Floy, when that man in Yorkshire gets you,' said Molly, as she followed her down to the dining-room, where Mrs. Palmer, a gentle, soft, calm person, a little like Florella, without either her talents or her soul, greeted her kindly.

Few of Florella's friends liked Molly Edgell; indeed, Violet Staunton called her a vampire, and said that she sucked the vital forces out of her friend; but whether from indolence or good sense, Aunt Connie had never contended points with the strong individualities of her two nieces.

Molly was, however, a person of self-command; she made herself agreeable at the *table d'hôte*, and afterwards, as she took her friend to pay the intended visit, chatted quite normally about her proposed set of papers, 'The Modern Girl as Invalid,'

'The Modern Girl as Tourist,' 'The Riviera Trotter,' and other fetching names occurring to her.

She took Florella far away from the haunts of Riviera trotters, where in a shabby little apartment they found an elderly couple, who seemed to Florella as sad a sight as she had ever seen. They were not quite old, so that no one could predict a speedy ending to their troubles. Their clothes were visibly shabby, and they looked as if they lived hard and did not like it. Mr. Randall was a dark-eyed man, with grey hair and beard, and a certain watchful look. He talked rather well to Florella about the place and about pictures, of which he had evidently once known something. He described two or three of William Hunt's little studies of birds' nests and apple blossom minutely, as if he had known them well. Florella felt sure that he had once possessed them.

The little lady—she was very small, thin, and white—looked as if she had been afraid to speak or look without caution for years.

Nothing was said about the son; but as Florella took leave of Mr. Randall, looking at him as she did so, a guess so startling flashed into her mind that she almost betrayed it in her face.

'I brought you to see them,' Molly whispered as they parted, 'because I wanted you to know what you promised to think about. And here, this was Jem at sixteen. Now you know what you ought to see in your visions.'

'That is the way to work the oracle,' said Florella, with a nervous little laugh, unusual with her. She took the little vignette photograph into her hand—a dark-eyed, good-looking schoolboy.

'It is like his father,' she said, giving it back, with the sudden remembrance that she had promised not to tell Guy anything about Molly Edgell's relations.

CHAPTER XVI.

BUSINESS.

EARLY in December a private meeting of landowners in the Kirkover, Flete Dale, and Ouseley districts, and of others interested in the proposed formation of a company to work the coal in those localities, was held in the dining-room at Ingleby Mill House.

Mr. Raby, as lord of the manor and owner of the chief part of the property concerned, was in the chair, grey-haired, dignified, the man of family and county rank. Near him was Wickham, on whose report, as an expert in mining engineering, the whole scheme practically depended.

Mr. Maxwell Mervyn, also a landowner, and, as he said, 'the only one of the lot, moreover, that had the oil to make the wheels go round,' looked knowing, having the recollection of one or two private interviews with Wickham, 'when Waynflete was out of the way,' over which he hugged himself. There was Mr. Waynflete himself, white-faced and gaunt, but with keen eyes and concentrated attention. There were one or two members of the numerous Palmer clan and others of their sort; and a young land surveyor, who had been consulted as to roads and means of transport; and, lastly, there was a certain Mr. Greenaway, new in the neighbourhood within the last few years, but the owner of large and increasing woollen mills in the Rilston district, and, it was said, of immense capital besides. He was the last made of the self-made men whom old Mr. Raby had recognised in turn, as their heads rose above the social level, and had, when it so pleased him, invited to dinner.

The Palmers looked askance at the new man; and Guy Waynflete, whose forefathers had owned and lost their lands before the Rabys came into the county, was scrupulously civil. But he recognised one of the powerful forces arrayed against him, for 'Greenaways' could take any contract in the trade that pleased them, and had no traditional scruples as to how to carry it out.

'I shall have to give in to the world,' he thought, 'if I do conquer the flesh and the devil.'

Mr. Raby was an expert as a chairman, and in his opening speech contrived to include every one, and say something pleasant to each. Then he called on Mr. Wickham for his report, and a long and carefully-argued-out statement was laid before the meeting, which, stripped of its technicalities, amounted to this—that having been asked by Mr. Raby and others to report on the possibilities with regard to coal in the Kirkover, Ouseley, and Flete Dale districts, he was of opinion that the coal seams were well worth working, especially if they were all under one management, so that the work could be done with the least possible waste of capital and energy. He

backed up this opinion with the reasons which appeared sufficient to him as to soil, sub-soil, character of the stone of the district, and of the lie of the land—many of the difficulties connected with the latter, which had formerly been hindrances to the work, being overcome by modern engineering improvements. He then sketched out roughly the plan which he thought ought to be followed. His hearers, he remarked, were in some cases already coal-masters, and were almost all familiar with the subject. The first shaft, he thought, ought to be sunk on the Raby property, at a spot called Moorfoot; but the company, if a company were formed, ought to have full control, at least, over the mining rights of Ouseley, Ouselwell, Flete Head, and Lady Well, a part of Flete Dale, a portion, as he understood, of the old Waynflete property. He showed how he expected the scheme to extend from its first small beginnings, and observed that the opening of a new local line from Rilston Junction to the great manufacturing centres afforded facilities of transport, and the means by which connection by coach or rail could be made with this, and with the Ingleby Canal, was also indicated.

The report lasted a long time, and was listened to with the closest attention by all present; and then, after a little discussion, much hampered by the reluctance of every one to give himself away, the scheme of forming a company was unfolded by a Rilston solicitor, who had been desired to draw it up. The undertaking required more capital than the landowners concerned were desirous to provide themselves; it was therefore proposed to form a company to work the coal. A certain number of shares could be assigned to each proprietor as equivalent for his land or his mining rights; they would also have the first chance of taking other shares, which might rapidly increase in value. A similar privilege was offered to others then present before the affair was made generally public.

Mr. Raby then remarked that he believed every one present had already heard the facts and proposals; they had indeed come together to record their respective decisions in the matter, rather than to receive the proposals for the first time. He himself was prepared to accept such shares as should be assigned to him, after a proper valuation in consideration of his mining rights in Kirkover, and also to put his name down, should the scheme finally take shape, for the purchase of other shares to a modest but important amount.

Then Mr. Maxwell Mervyn, hardly waiting for the old gentleman to end his speech, jumped up and remarked that he was a new-comer, but had looked about him a bit since last June, and was fully prepared to accept the small number of shares assigned to him as equivalent for his mining rights in 'his little place' at Ouseley, and also to become purchaser of more, to the tune of a sum which, as Guy knew, represented a large proportion of his recent inheritance. He did not, he remarked, put '*all* his cargo in one ship,' though he believed the present vessel to be thoroughly seaworthy, with a first-class crew, and a good chart to sail by. He spoke well, with complete *aplomb*, and there was a murmur of applause as he sat down.

Then old Matthew, the patriarch of the Palmer clan, rose to his feet, and in a slow, dry way stated that it was not the first time he had heard of seeking for coal in the districts named. 'Mr. Guy' might have heard that when his great-aunt purchased Flete Head and Flete Dale, the mining rights were considered of no value. Before he let the shareholders see the colour of his money, he should like either to have a second opinion or to see a boring made in Flete Dale, which would put the matter beyond a doubt. He was not saying anything against Mr. Wickham, a most industrious young man, and, as he knew, well certificated; but still he was a stranger, and did not know the country as those who had been born and bred there. He could tell them—here he adduced facts—of other coal districts where land of the nature of that now under discussion had proved sadly disappointing, the seams being thin and full of faults.

Then Mr. Wickham stood up, and begged to say that he had suggested the employment of a second expert to Mr. Raby, who had given him to understand that a report had already been made on Kirkover, which coincided with his own, and that a boring had been made there. A second so near at hand would be a great expense, and, he thought, needless. Mr. Matthew Palmer's remarks were much to the point, and thoroughly scientific, so far as the science of fifty years back went; but modern methods make much feasible which had then been impossible, as he hoped the company, if formed, would show.

Mr. Raby confirmed what had been said about the former report on Kirkover. 'Come, come, Mr. Matthew,' he said, 'we must acknowledge that, however long we may have lived in the county, we have never been able to see through the ground.'

'Nay, we'll never see thick, level coal-seams under the old roads in Flete Dale, however long ye look,' said Mr. Matthew, good-humouredly, but conclusively. 'However, it's for Mr. Guy, the landowner, to say.'

Guy spoke very briefly, but with a certain eagerness. He was willing to part with his mining rights for such an equivalent in shares as was thought to represent their value in Flete Dale. As, however, Flete Head closely adjoined the spot where the first shaft was to be sunk, and would certainly be entirely taken up by the works and plant necessary for the operations, he would be prepared to part with the property outright to the mining company, if it should come into being, for a proper equivalent in shares. Flete Head was worthless for cultivation, as they all knew, but modern science might show that its coal had value.

Then he sat down, feeling bitterly that every one present who knew anything, knew as well as he knew himself that he had no spare capital, and that he wanted ready money, but with a kindling hope that the money might be at hand.

His face was not pleasant as Mr. Greenaway rose to his feet, and in accents which had not yet accommodated themselves to his well-cut clothes and air of wealth and prosperity, said that he had listened to the report with much interest, and felt convinced that the matter was worth taking up. Nothing could be done without some risk. However, he had a little idle cash, and he was prepared to see if he could turn it over. He would come forward and would put his name down for—a number of shares far exceeding those already assigned, and which, in fact, made the undertaking possible, and himself the chief factor in the concern.

After this one or two more put down their names, and Mr. Raby summed up, making proper remarks to every one present; and after the usual formal proposing, seconding, and voting by the meeting, 'The Kirkover, Ouseley, and Flete Head Mining Company, Limited,' entered on a legal existence, and proceeded to draw up a prospectus for the information of the public.

Before they separated, Mr. Waynflete, after due consultation with Mr. Raby, proposed that, in consideration of the services rendered by Mr. Wickham to the company, a certain number of shares in it should be put down to his name, and this being seconded by Mr. Greenaway, was passed unanimously.

Mr. Wickham expressed his satisfaction in becoming terms,

observing that he should prefer that mode of recognition of his services to any other.

Another meeting was fixed for the appointment of manager of the new works, and a working committee was at once appointed. It was felt that everything pointed to the election of Mr. Wickham as the certified manager of the concern ; but his position as engineer to the Ingleby pits might make this difficult, and the matter required adjustment and consultation.

The meeting broke up into groups, and Mr. Greenaway described some improvements in his looms for weaving fancy goods which he had just introduced into the Rilston Mills at considerable expense, and asked Mr. Waynflete if he had tried them at Ingleby.

Wickham went off towards his lodgings, and was presently overtaken by Max Mervyn, very cheerful and confidential, and feeling himself, in virtue of previous interviews, quite in the 'hub' of the new company.

Yes, Wickham thought matters had gone very well. The shareholders were, in his opinion, in luck's way. For his part, he only wished that he could afford to hold on to the shares that had been generously assigned to him ; but he was a poor devil in need of ready money, and he believed he should have to realise them, if he could do so quietly and confidentially. Of course, if he did so publicly it would look as if he did not believe in the prospects of the company. It was a great pity, as they would certainly increase in value.

Max walked all the way home with him, went in for a pipe and a whisky-and-soda, and, before he came out, had been struck by the idea of doing a good thing for himself and a good-natured thing by Wickham, if he offered to buy the latter's shares from him. He also became imbued with the notion that the engineer was not the only person to whom ready money was more necessary than prospective profits. Wickham could be confidential with a friend ; his affairs mattered to nobody, but there was some one else who could not own to wanting a sum down. If Mervyn would leave the matter to him, and keep it dark, he thought that he could put him in the way of obtaining more shares while they were to be had at an advantage—shares that could only be parted with privately, but which Max would be easily able to dispose of for an increased amount. It was quite evident from Mr. Greenaway's line that, through agents and under the rose, he would

secure every share that was put in the market, and Max could sell at an advantage to him; others could not.

When Max went home he had left the affair in Wickham's hands, and had got—for he was cautious how he committed himself—the refusal of Wickham's own shares for a week. He walked off, much pleased with himself from a business point of view. There were two points, however, on which, in his capacity as country gentleman, he was still anxious. He could not ride and he could not shoot, neither accomplishment having been hitherto within his means. He wasn't going to be a bad shot, nor look like a beggar on horseback, making himself the laughing-stock of all these young squires by pretending to do what he couldn't do.

He was going to learn, and, what was more, he was going to *say* he was learning. Then people would know what to expect of him, and he would not make a fool of himself by pretence. And in that resolution Maxwell Mervyn showed a degree of common sense so uncommon that it almost redeemed his self-conceit, and rounded it off into an equivalent for honesty and candour.

He could dance; that was an accomplishment which could be acquired in the suburbs, though no doubt the Christmas ball talked of at Kirkton would be something of a new experience. He wondered if old Kits would be there; he supposed not. He wished Miss Raby or Miss Greenaway were as pretty as Kits. Some day he would tell his old playfellow how cleverly he had managed about the shares, just as he used to boast to her down at Baywood, when he got a pair of lop-eared rabbits at a bargain.

Good old Kits!

Sweet little Kitty! The dinner-party and Katie's infant-angel look changed for Wickham a mere amusement, over which prudence could exercise a complete control, into an eager passion which might at any time master prudence. He lived very much on the strain, and wanted something besides plans, calculations, and anxieties. Visions of a possible future, if his plans succeeded, began to float before him, and at any rate he could not deny himself present pleasure. He was very anxious, as has been said, that his interest in Katie should not be discovered; but he thought that no parson could resist the flattery of a layman's interest in parochial affairs, and between the dinner-party and the meeting had offered to help a little with

the preparations for the proposed coffee tavern. Mr. and Mrs. Lennox, however, had eyes beyond the horizon of their parish. They were aware of Katie's beauty, and also of the flutter of her little soul, though they gave her credit for more discretion than she possessed. Mrs. Lennox quietly looked after her, and enforced her decision about the training college, and so it fell out that, on the day when, after the meeting at the Mill House, he made some excuse to call at the vicarage, he encountered Katie herself in the fields in the misty, frosty, winter sunset, she told him with tears and despair that she was to go away. He sympathised, consoled, kissed, promised that a day should come—— And all was indeed sun and mist till Katie said quite innocently—

'Will you come now, and tell Mrs. Lennox?'

'Tell her—what, that I met Kitty alone?'

'She won't mind—if—now we are engaged,' whispered Katie; 'and then we can see each other always.'

For one moment it crossed Wickham's mind that it might be the best thing he could do, whatever happened in the future to set up an acknowledged engagement with Katie now; but he was afraid of questions and inquiries. No, it was too much to risk; so he set himself to persuade her to wait awhile until a poor fellow like himself could produce means enough to satisfy her friends.

'Oh,' said Katie, 'but I think you have a great deal more money for managing the mines than ever dear father had. It would be *quite* enough.'

Then Wickham had to be mysterious, and beg her to trust him.

'I don't think I ought to be engaged, and not to tell Mrs. Lennox,' said Katie.

'Well, we needn't call it engaged—only that we wish to be.'

Katie's instincts were confused and her conscience out of focus. It was wrong to be engaged in secret; but if she *was* engaged, it would not be so wrong to have little meetings, and to post secret notes, because 'He' would always take care of her, and there was a sort of delight in doing what would be wrong otherwise—exchanging whispers, squeezes of the hand, kisses even, when one knew all the while that one could turn round and say, 'It's all right; we're engaged.'

She had no notion of teasing him or of trying her power; indeed, she had no notion of how great it was. She pressed closer to him and whispered, 'I'll do just what you tell me,' and

so rolled her conscience out of the way, and laid the burden of decision off her weak little shoulders.

She was tutored and warned, and told that if she betrayed herself she would probably be sent away at once out of his way; coaxed and praised, and seemed as passive as he could wish. Then, just as they were parting, she suddenly amazed him by seizing his hands and pouring out the story of her long-cherished love with unexpected passion.

'I should have *died* if you hadn't cared for me!' she said.

Wickham was touched, almost awed for the moment, but all the same he felt that he was in deeper water than he had expected.

Poor Katie!

(*To be continued.*)

THROUGH PINK GLASSES.

FOR a long while things have been very quiet in the realms of minor poetry. It is now, so far as I remember, some four or five years since Mr. Traill brought out his memorable list of minor poets, and, since that time, few of those named have done much towards winning their way to a higher stage. It is true that Mr. Alfred Austin—who figured, I believe, in Mr. Traill's article—has been promoted to the position of Poet Laureate, but the great body of critics still refuse to treat his verses with the respect that position should deserve. But, just lately, a sudden popularity has been achieved by two singers who were totally unknown four years ago. Most of our newspaper critics seem to be agreed that, if there is any hope for the future of English poetry, it is to be found in the works of Mr. Stephen Phillips or of Mr. Henry Newbolt.

* * * * * *

The 'Poems' of Mr. Phillips was, as most of us have heard by this time, the book chosen by the proprietors of the *Academy* to receive the handsome prize of one hundred guineas. It was, in fact, the 'crowned' book of the year; Mr. Henley's 'Essay on Burns,' which I have adverted to before in these pages, coming in a good second. I regret that I cannot speak from experience of the whole of Mr. Phillips' book, but I fancy I have seen most of the poems republished there. I read his 'Christ in Hades' (which is certainly one of the most important poems in the new volume) when it appeared in the 'Shilling Garland' series. It proved conclusively that the author had the rare faculty of writing musical blank verse. It showed also that he was not afraid of handling a lofty theme, and that he could treat it with a certain austere dignity and reticence. I confess that I did not care very greatly for the few shorter poems that went to make up the volume.

* * * * * *

Curiously enough, this same 'Shilling Garland' is responsible

for the 'Admirals All' of our second poet. Like his predecessor, Mr. Newbolt intends soon, I believe, to include this selection in a full-sized volume of verse. Swing and dash are the prominent qualities in Mr. Newbolt's work, and I should judge him to have been influenced largely by the ballads of Mr. Kipling, and by Stevenson's essays. His first poem, which gives a title to the book, seems to me to be merely a version of the famous paper on 'The English Admirals' in 'Virginibus Purrisque' done into rhyme. Frankly, I did not care very much for the rendering, although it is spirited enough. 'Drake's Drum' is infinitely better; it is, in my opinion, far the best thing in the volume. Mr. Newbolt's muse is patriotic and Devonian, and in singing of a Devonshire hero he is naturally at his best. 'Admirals All' has gone into an eighth edition. On the whole, it deserves that honour, though I cannot but think that certain critics have rated it something too highly.

* * * * * *

The first week of February witnessed the publication, nearly simultaneous, of new novels from four well-known writers belonging to the younger school of English fiction. 'The War of the Worlds' by H. G. Wells, 'Shrewsbury' by Stanley Weyman, 'The Vintage' by E. F. Benson, and Dr. Conan Doyle's 'Tragedy of the *Korosko*' make up this formidable quartette. All four novels have appeared in serial form. I may have someting to say of 'Shrewsbury' and 'The Vintage' next month. At present I have not had time to read them. Other things being equal, I prefer the unhistorical novel for purposes of recreation, and I have reason to believe that these two stories are both tarred with the historical brush. From Mr. Weyman, of course, we have learned to expect this sort of thing, but it is something of a surprise to find the author of 'Dodo' and 'The Babe, B.A.,' attempting a serious novel dealing with the Greek War of Independence. From pure curiosity, I shall feel myself compelled to read 'The Vintage.'

* * * * * *

Mr. H. G. Wells has a fertile imagination and a logical mind. Permit him to make his first assumption, and he will draw for your benefit consequences that have the merit of seeming inevitable. After reading 'The War of the Worlds,' you go away convinced that if the inhabitants of Mars ever took it into their heads to pay us a visit, they would do it just after the

fashion he describes. The reality of his descriptions is wonderful; he knows how to insert just those slight touches of incident that make the scene live. Certain passages in this book burn themselves into the memory—notably the description of the panic-stricken mob fleeing from London towards the North, and the gallant dash of the little torpedo-catcher against her formidable opponents.

* * * * * *

The fantastic nature of his romances leads one naturally to compare Mr. Wells with M. Jules Verne—a veteran whose works we are too much accustomed to regard as mere books for boys. There is the same mingling of science with fantasy—one trusts there is not the same prophetic instinct. For the French author certainly anticipated by many years some remarkable inventions. His submarine boat, the *Nautilus*, performed her duties (in fiction) with entire success long before her imitators began to appear in real life. And it is remarkable that the further we experiment in this direction, the more closely we approach to his model. I hope sincerely that the Martians will make no attempt to justify our English author. At any rate, they need not choose England, out of so large an area, for their first visit. Mr. Wells makes them descend near Woking; in fact, his book would make an excellent guide-book for London and her suburbs in that direction. By a curious coincidence, too, he makes them arrive by much the same means as M. Verne employed years ago in his 'From the Earth to the Moon;' they come in cylinders, fired presumably from some Martian ordnance. I do not ascribe this resemblance to any lack of invention on Mr. Wells's part. Those who read his books are slow to impute any such defect to him.

* * * * * *

The *Korosko* was a Nile steamer, carrying a party of tourists (perhaps a better assorted party than is commonly found) on a pleasant excursion up that ancient river. They visit a tomb, situated just at the point where civilisation ends, and are carried off by Dervishes. Several characters, who are not greatly wanted, are killed, and the rest are rescued by the timely arrival of the Egyptian Camel Corps. I am aware that this is a bald account, but the story, excellent as it is, is not remarkable for complexity. 'The Tragedy of the *Korosko*' contains less of all that distinguishes a novel from a short story than any book I know—less even than Mr. Kipling's 'Captains Courageous.'

It is true that the characters are ably sketched—they can hardly be said to be drawn—but of plot there is absolutely none. And yet the book is thrilling enough for anybody; it is impossible to deny that it makes admirable reading. There are good touches everywhere; the story rings naturally throughout; and the *dramatis personæ* behave just as they might be expected to behave, with the possible exception of the two Emirs. But there is not material enough in the one incident of the capture, handle it ever so cleverly, to furnish out a full-blown novel.

* * * * *

I suppose we are coming by degrees to the general acceptance of this sort of a book as a novel, but it has no claim to the title. Dr. Doyle has written very good novels before now, as 'The Refugees' and 'Micah Clarke,' but I fancy that he will find his later method at once easier and more profitable; and I begin to doubt whether we shall see another real novel from his pen. 'The Tragedy of the *Korosko*' will sell, probably, as well as anything he ever wrote. It is eminently readable, and I cannot think that its author spent many sleepless nights over its production. But no great work will ever be accomplished after this method. I am inclined to think sometimes that the growing fondness for the magazine story has killed the novel. There will be no market for a new Thackeray; and the effect of this will be that readers will have but a nodding acquaintance with the characters of future fiction; they will not be allowed to grow slowly into friendship with them—the sort of friendship we felt towards a Colonel Newcome. And the curious thing is, that most people to whom you mention this will smile blandly, and say that they prefer the modern method—it is so much less trouble.

E. H. Lacon Watson.

FROM MY ATTIC WINDOW.

A New Sunday Club. A Sunday club for women is the latest development of woman's clubland. It is a club established from the most kindly and charitable motives by the Hon. Coralie Glynn and Miss Alice Sandford. They have had a peep into the lives of thousands of women in London, who work all the week in shops, at typewriting, as clerks, or at the thousand and one occupations whereby women earn a living, and on Sundays have nothing but the grey loneliness of a lodging to call home. And they have seen how grey and lonely this substitute for a home is. Even if these girls or women attend three services—and not many are physically able to do that—there is the evening return to the everydayness—to coin a clumsy word—of the surroundings of the week. To provide a place for rest and recreation and pleasant intercourse, the Camelot Club has come into being. Rooms have been secured at the College for Men and Women in Bloomsbury, and the subscription has been fixed at five shillings. There is a dining-room, tea-room, drawing and silence room for reading or writing, and occasional musical evenings and discussions will be arranged. The simple aim of the club is to provide a little weekly patch of cheerful, cultivated home life. Men will not be admitted to these rooms; but in connection with the Camelot is a summer edition, yclept the Rambling Club, for outdoor recreation, of which members of the other sex are, or may be, members. Surely such an institution should suggest no reflections but thanks for the kindly spirit which seeks to make the sun shine where it never shone before.

* * * * * *

A Modern Problem. And yet, incidentally, it does bring up the question of the observance of Sunday; and Sunday is one of our modern problems. Maybe it is a problem we have created for ourselves, maybe it is a problem the age has created for us. But, however conceived, it is here. In the life of the country

the question has one form, in the life of the towns it has another. But everywhere it is a definite problem, and, to settle it, even deans, in Diocesan Conference assembled, cannot agree. We have arrived at a time when public opinion on what it is ethically lawful and expedient to do on a Sunday is in a state of flux. On the one hand we have the strict Sabbatarian, who regards the only legitimate occupation for Sunday to be attendance at public worship and private meditation. On the other hand, we have those who advocate and most consistently practise the rational Sunday, with its outdoor and indoor amusements. Probably somewhere between these two, in the golden mean which is so difficult to find, lies salvation. But these things are not for me, who am but a gazer from a gabled window, to decide. But I look around and see the clerk, the shop-assistant, thousands of men and women, who from Monday to Saturday are immersed inside gloomy walls and close streets, and when Sunday morning breaks, and the smell of spring-time is in the air, I see them casting longing eyes, and sighing for the breath of God's air in God's country. And I sigh for them, and wonder what the truest Sabbath would be for them?

Then, again, I look around and see the man of letters, the woman who charms society, and the working man, who make Sunday, at the very least after the morning service, a day of amusement, of the entertaining of friends, of travel, of variety. And I think how far we are from the days of the serenity of good George Herbert, and the simplicity of our pious forefathers. The difficulty lies in deciding where to stop the thin end of the wedge from growing thicker. If the cycle, the harmless recreation of the thousands, why not golf and cricket and football, with their big fields and crowds? why not shooting and fishing and tennis, the recreation of other thousands?

Then as to entertainments, who would forbid the friendly call and the simple hospitality of friends? But, hey presto! and there is the Sunday 'At Home,' the luncheon parties, and the evening concert. Then where is the Sabbath rest for servants, and the Sabbath repose for guests and hosts? The complexity, the rush, the restlessness, and the grind of these days have verily multiplied its problems to bewilderment. One thing is certain, Sunday is a lost day if in it there is no time set apart for the strengthening of that little life of our spirit, which pleads so ceaselessly for food and growth; for looking downward to the foundations of our being, and onward to its aim and end.

With that hypothesis, sympathies, and deep earnestness, every man must solve his own Sabbath day problem.

* * * * * *

Only a Story. It is such a simple tale, I hesitate to tell it. I know it can be equalled and surpassed by ten hundred others. But the man lies in his grave; very few people have heard of him; he has no medal, not even a dinner in his honour. Yet he lay down his life for some unknown children.

He was a carman, of Bethnal Green, by name Henry James Kent, aged forty-six. He was driving along a road in the West End of London one day in January, when three little children ran into the road, directly in front of his horse. Quick as thought he acted. It was the only way to save them. He deliberately pulled his horse into the kerb and threw it down. But the shock was so great that he was pitched out, and died two days after. The jury brought in a verdict of 'accidental death,' and that was the end of the story. Twelve lines in a newspaper, a coroner's inquest, a bereaved home, perhaps—who knows?—a desolated home in Bethnal Green, and his life is done. Not quite, though, for one day—

'He will wake, and remember, and understand.'

And so shall we; and we shall know a hero when we meet one.

* * * * * *

'There were some young ladies of Hitchin,
Who became every day more bewitchin';
So they founded a college,
For feminine knowledge—
Greek, mathematics, and stichin'!'

Colleges for Women. Thus does this classic poem record the foundation of Girton College. But since the days when a modest house at Hitchin was taken for the propagation of 'feminine knowlege' a change has come over the spirit of things. Then colleges for women only came into the wild dreams of a few enthusiasts; now they are ordinary factors in girl life and women's education.

Girton is an old establishment, with history at its back—quite a grandmother among educational institutions. In fact, it has prospered so much that it has to grow to keep abreast of its own prosperity. Miss Emily Davies, the devoted honorary secretary, and withal one of the founders, has conceived a

colossal scheme of enlargement at a cost of £50,000. A new dining-hall, fifty new sets of rooms, and various other additions, are needed, she says; and Mrs. Maria Grey, that veteran educationalist, most pathetically appeals that as the last generation made great efforts for this, this generation will make efforts for the next.

But Girton has a sister at Newnham, and Newnham has students booked into the next century. Oxford has Somerville and Lady Margaret's Hall. Edinburgh has just completed a new hall of residence, and has women students galore. Durham University welcomes them warmly, and Victoria University even gives them fellowships—an example Cambridge and Oxford have not yet followed! Glasgow and St. Andrews and Dublin receive women students on almost the same terms as men. And all institutions are growing in size and favour.

But most startling of all, perhaps, is the story of women's colleges in Wales. Fourteen years ago there was not a single woman student at Aberystwyth. In 1883 a small women's department, with ten students, was opened. Residence was made compulsory in 1887, and a small hall was built. To-day the students have outgrown their hall. They number 175, and a hall to accommodate 2000 students is in process of building. This all tells one tale. A college course is no longer an abnormal event, marking a girl out as a strange and fearsome being, who may be expected to break out into any and every eccentricity at a moment's notice. It is now a normal condition of a girl's life for her to go on to college when she leaves school.

* * * * * *

College Life and Real Life.

But, nevertheless, the average man—that unknown quantity—and the woman who has been 'finished' at a school, together with a few philosophers and a sprinkling of pomposities, still contend that a college course unfits women for their sphere; that they are spoiled for wives, unfitted to be mistresses of households; that they become self-assertive and unpleasant; that, in short, it is bad for themselves and worse for their friends. But looked at calmly and dispassionately, are these things so? One of the wisest of mothers, most tactful of hostesses, and best of housekeepers whom I know was not very far down in the Classical Tripos lists. And her talent for doll-dressing amounts to genius. Of course, there are women who were college students who are scholars, in the

technical sense, and are only at home among books. But that can hardly, with any fairness, be written down to the account of college life; they were students born, not college made.

And as to the self-assertion. It is only vanity that puffeth up; the more real and deep the knowledge, the more humble and truthful its possessor.

Of course, in the case of teachers by profession, no one offers any objection. It is a necessary part of their equipment. But even if a woman is not a salaried professional teacher, are not women by Nature's appointment teachers in the home? And surely educators should be first and most thoroughly educated.

But I am not briefed for special pleading.

* * * * * *

Concerning the Situation of Wife.

There are wives and wives. Some marry their husbands; some marry at the same time his profession. I am not now thinking of the wife of the small shopkeeper, who is a partner—and not a sleeping partner either—in the business; nor of the wife of the peer, who can do as much, or as little, 'peering' as she pleases; but of the great middle class who lie between. If a woman marries a stockbroker she knows that her husband is something in the City, and there the matter ends. If she is the wife of a draper, a coal merchant, a grocer, or a tailor, she knows as little about the business as she may, and only refers to it when occasion imperatively demands. That, I suppose, is the attitude of the average wife, who does not feel the burden of moral responsibility in regard to her husband's *employés*. Doctors' and solicitors' wives may or may not have a judiciously selected visiting list; but with that, their connection with the money-making ends.

But for the other class of wives there are different conditions. The wife of the politician must indeed be politic, or the House of Commons or the County Council will see their husbands no more. They are as really the servants of the country as the men they have married. And still more is this emphasised in the wife of any minister of religion. The wife of the missionary must be a missionary too, or she will be no real wife. The wife of the bishop is not only the wife of her husband. The wife of the minister of a Free Church is a minister, too, on different lines. And as for the wife of the curate, hear her speak for herself. She says:—'A girl may be kind, and strong, and sympathetic, and have qualities which may make a clergyman (who, nine times out of ten, does not want a district-visitor-wife

talking "shop" all day long to him) think her a suitable companion, and she may amply fulfil his hopes and wishes; but woe unto her if she is not built of material that can slave from morning till night, at services, decorations, meetings, working parties, classes, sick visiting, and so on, and yet be able to undertake all social duties, calls, inquiries, dinner-parties, afternoon teas, concerts, bicycling, and the like! Woe to her if she goes into society, for then she is "always gadding about"! Woe to her if she does not, for then she keeps herself too much to herself, and is stuck-up! Woe to her if she has many friends, for they make mischief all round for her with their tattlings and exaggerated repetitions! Woe to her if she wisely makes no friends but those of her own family, for then she is "difficile," and, "You see, she has no friends, my dear!" Even her husband is disconcerted to find that she is in disfavour; whilst all she can do, poor soul, is to "hold her still in the Lord," obey the advice to be a keeper at home, and hope that some day a time may come when congregations shall see that it is unreasonable enough to expect the whole time, thoughts, energies, hopes, sympathies, and even happiness of a man to be given them in exchange for £150 a-year, to say nothing of their demanding those of his wife thrown in as well.' That is the seamy side to the picture. But, after all, there is the sunshine which comes from being a real helpmeet in life's work, and not a drawing-room ornament.

ANNIE GROSER HURD.

The China Cupboard.

ARRANGED BY CHELSEA CHINA.

(*For the regulations of all 'Monthly Packet' Competitions, see p.* 360.)

FIRST SHELF.

VARIETY SUBJECT.

SUBJECT FOR JANUARY.

Take a female character from a writer of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, and compare them. (Shakespeare is included.)

Yes! But Chelsea China is inclined to think that *Nora* is right, and that he 'didn't ought to have been.' He puts everything out of focus. 'Compare Portia, Elizabeth Bennett, and *Mona McClean*. Compare the mental struggles of Hamlet, Faust, and Donovan! Compare the Madonna di San Sisto and The Three Choristers!'

It won't quite do. Pompilia might have ended the line which Imogen began, and perhaps if Christabel's story had not been left half told, and we had known how she fared under the unholy spells of the Lady Geraldine, she might have stood between them. Shirley *might* have stood up to Portia; certainly Princess Ida might well have done so. This want of any proportion between the characters compared has been the difficulty. Another is certainly that the nineteenth century cannot be gathered up under one representative. Marian Dashwood, Ethel May, and Marcella stand quite far enough apart to make a good sequence, and each yearned after an ideal. The difficulty of finding eighteenth-century heroines has evidently been great, and, in some cases, characters have been chosen, between whom there is nothing at all in common, so that they can't compare any more than bread sauce and roast beef. The following sequences strike Chelsea China as *fairly* comparable—

Imogen, Clarissa Harlowe, Pompilia (innocent and wronged); Britomart, Corinne, Princess Ida (intellectual); Portia, Di Vernon, Shirley (*much* the better half of their lovers).

Lady Townley ('The Provoked Husband'); Lady Teasle, Dodo (lively and discontented wives).

Argemone Lavington, Ethel Newcome, and Theodora Martindale would form an interesting triad for any one who cared to study the stirrings of the great Church movement from various points of view. And for those who seek enlightenment on social problems from the pages of fiction, the views of Sophia Western, on the morality of her lover, might show that the first word on the subject was not said by a Heavenly Twin. Many other such comparisons might be drawn with edification, for there is nothing more interesting than to trace essential resemblances under outward differences, and we get things into focus when we look for them in a wide field.

The sequences sent in are as follows:—

Cressida, Clelia (in Crabbe's 'The Borough'), Etta ('The Towers'). *Sepoy.* (These unpleasant ladies are very well done.) Portia, Elizabeth Bennett, Mona McClean, *E. V. B.* (well written, but Mona can't hold up the nineteenth-century plank).

Imogen, Olivia Primrose, Maggie Tulliver, *Miranda* (good).

Beatrice, Olivia, Beatrix, *Cynthia.* (Beatrix is not a good choice for the nineteenth century.)

Christiana ('Pilgrim's Progress'), Mrs. Primrose, Lucy Gray (in Wordsworth's poems), *Holly Leaf.* (These are usually confused as characters without regard to their centuries.)

There remains *Proserphina*, whose good writing obtains the prize, and *Nora*, whose amusing conversation is given, though she is out of the running, having only chosen two ladies.

Heroines from Three Centuries.

Rosalind—'As you like it.'

Evelina—'Miss Burney.'

Dorothea—'Middlemarch.'

These three are chosen as all typical of the ideal woman of their time, as well as very real flesh and blood women, created from their author's assimilation of his environment.

They are all three good women, too, truthful, pure, and upright, in spite of their mistakes, follies, and lovable little weaknesses; and though Evelina's biographer is a rather puny figure between Shakespeare and a great woman, her heroine yet serves our purpose better than Goldsmith's Olivia, Sophia, or Miss Hardcastle, as being more typical of eighteenth-century ideals, and less of a pretty lay figure upon which to mould a costume of moral and style; and it is probably from the influence of their respective eras that the earliest and latest heroines of the three have a courage and nobility and frankness about them, denied to poor little Fanny Burney's heroine.

Rosalind, though she moved through dateless Arcadia, has a breath of Elizabethan freedom and freshness in her bearing and speech. We feel she might have learnt Latin and Greek with Edward VI. and Lady Jane Grey, and that she could never have embodied herself in such a gracious, witty, joyous, and dazzling a form, at a time when woman was lightly thought of, or down-trodden, restricted, and dull.

Dorothea, we have always felt, belonged rather to the period in which she made her appearance—a time when women's wings were fluttering and unfurling for a gallant flight to broader fields of learning, duty, and endeavour, rather than to the decade in which her authoress located her. In the flesh, and born at her proper date, she would have gone to Newnham, or studied medicine, and learnt moderation and proportion, and perhaps have acquired the saving touch of humour to salt and flavour her beautiful self-sacrifice, and her rather irritating originality, and absence of conventionality and work-a-day sense.

But it is the intense seriousness and earnestness, the haunting sense that all the world is wrong or miserable, the burning desire to set it right and heal its woes, that essentially marks Dorothea as the typical nineteenth-century heroine.

Of the brave, frank, pure joy of life that sends Rosalind bounding through our vision of the forest, that makes love the tenderest, merriest, most beautiful of Cupids, that sends romance and philosophy into every adventure and experience, and shines woman's wit and woman's tenderness as the most dazzling jewels, the heroine of the nineteenth century has little trace. She does not revel in the joyousness of life, she rarely sees it sane and sees it whole. She has lost much of the childish mirth and vivacity of earlier heroines, and has suffered in nerve and temper and attractiveness from

over-crowded interests, and the unending complications of the confused faith of modern times.

Where confusion reigns supreme amongst the ideals of faith, and duty, and truth, the outline of the typical heroine is not unnaturally blurred out of its fair womanly proportions.

Even Evelina, looking out of the tarnished vulgar frame of the eighteenth-century surroundings, has more simplicity, power of enjoyment, and the right judgment, born of native feminine wit, than the far nobler, more powerful Dorothea.

With all her little affectations, her ignorance, and her over-strained sentiment, she would never have made the mistake of marrying Mr. Casaubon, or have fallen in love with so unfinished and feeble a hero as Will Ladislaw.

The heroine of Middlemarch is innocent, truthful, conscientious (terribly conscientious), and she possesses as well as represents a great ideal; but she is not Rosalind, and, alas! is it not very doubtful whether the nineteenth century could produce a Rosalind?

Her indescribable charm, her pretty wit, and the graceful telling of the play are so obvious that we are perhaps in some danger of missing the finer qualities of Rosalind, the substance and reality that supports the charm.

The pure, innocent directness of her love, its constancy and ever-increasing tenderness, yet her wonderful light veiling of it, her womanly defence of its treasure from anything but exchange for love as great, are different indeed from the mawkish sentiment, the simulated passion, the indiscreet freedom of the heroines of many modern love stories.

Her resource and courage, moreover, are worthy of the most modern maiden's admiration, and one feels how much more modesty shelters under her "doublet and hose" than under the modern lady traveller's jauntily-described costume.

Her friendship with Celia, her generosity to Olivia, the common sense and readiness displayed in her treatment of Jacques' cynical philosophy, and Phœbe's love-story, mark her many-sided, large-hearted nature, and give us the idea that the womankind of a period which gave data for her, and Beatrice, Portia, and Cordelia, could not have been far from perfection in its ideal woman.

If we have shaken off the affectations, puerilities, and vulgarities of the eighteenth century, we cannot feel that a generation, whose heroines are morbidly philanthropic, humourless, and near-sighted, are as near to the enthronement of women, as the fresh, vigorous, romantic Elizabethans.—PROSERPHINA.

X. (who is studying the 'China Cupboard' in the intervals of preparing for a parish 'treat')—Tell me what writer of the seventeenth century to take a female character from. Shakespeare is allowed, but I don't find that that helps one much.

B.—No; I think he hardly comes into court. Not so much because he seems to belong to the "spacious times of great Elizabeth," as that his women are not in the least those of the seventeenth or any other century, but for all time.

X.—Yes, that is just what I feel. One might be lucky enough to meet Beatrice in London any day. Rosalind one *has* met, riding a bicycle, and acting (very well, too) in amateur theatricals. Portia is on the School Board, or the Board of Guardians. Juliet! well, I am not so sure about Juliet and Ophelia, but I expect they still exist, even in these days.

B.—No; the seventeenth-century heroine, as such, is only to be met with, I am afraid, in the Restoration drama; and about the women of the Restoration drama the less said the better! Miss Hoyden would, I suppose, have to be taken as an example of the natural country girl; Mrs. Millamant,

or Lady Plyant, as a type of the artificial woman of the world—and the one is about as repulsive as the other.

X.—I suppose that, as a matter of fact, good women, or even commonly respectable women, were not interesting to seventeenth-century writers. At the beginning of the eighteenth century we find Addison describing his ideal woman in 'Aurelia,' but her virtues are of a negative, uninteresting kind, and the sketch is a very slight one; while the widow to whom Sir Roger de Coverley made love for forty years is no companion portrait to that of the dear old knight, or even to the pictures of Honeycomb or Will Wimble.

B.—It was left to Richardson to give us, with the first English novel, the first *heroine;* and it marks a significant change in society, that each of his greater books should be the history of a woman.

X.—But I don't want to take either 'Pamela' or 'Clarissa' as my 'female character.' I know how clever, how extraordinarily clever, they are; but the one with her happy ending aggravates me as much as the long-drawn-out tragedy of the other. No; when we come to the eighteenth century, there is only one heroine for me—Evelina!

B.—She is a charming little person, I admit, and it is easy to sympathise with her in her embarrassments at the 'Ridotto,' and in all that she has to put up with from the delightfully vulgar Braughtons, and the persecution of Sir Clement Willoughby.

X.—I can even rejoice when she is finally rewarded with the aristocratic hand of Lord Orville, though he is not good enough for her.

B.—But with what modern heroine are you going to compare Evelina?

X.—With Marcella. Not because there are not other heroines as lovable, as interesting, as human, but because she seems to me to combine some of the characteristic features of the so-called 'new woman' with a dignity and nobility which we do not always find in her, at least as presented to us in up-to-date fiction. She is as large-minded as Dorothea Brooke, and more comprehensible; as warm-hearted and *alive* as poor, passionate Maggie Tulliver.

B.—Pardon me, but it is with Evelina that you have to compare your nineteenth-century heroine, Marcella, if you will, and not with George Eliot's women, interesting though the comparison might be.

X.—Yes, I know; and what a contrast we have in the two! Evelina is a good little girl, warm-hearted and pure-minded. She *develops*, too; for the writer of that dignified, womanly letter to Lord Orville, towards the end of the book, is not the shy, immature little maiden of the 'Ridotto.' But how utterly and entirely unconscious she is of any larger life than that of her own little circle. Of Humanity, with the capital H, she has no conception. To be able to give five or ten guineas to a beggar is the eighteenth-century idea of philanthropy. Evelina has no suspicion that the beggar ought not to exist; that, existing, he ought not to be relieved by haphazard guineas; that her own right to the guineas might be questioned.

B.—Miss Austen's heroines are very much the same, though they lived a good many years after Evelina. They live their narrow little lives, going the round of such society as a country neighbourhood affords, apparently completely ignorant of wider issues, of intenser joys and sorrows, than their own. The Bennetts seem to have laid their siege to Mr. Bingley; the Woodhouses to have given their little supper parties, and discussed Jane Fairfax and Mrs. Elton; and all the time to have been perfectly indifferent to the fact that the American War was barely over, that the French Revolution was in progress, that the nineteenth century was being ushered in by wars and rumours of wars.

X.—I don't think that any heroines before those of George Eliot were at all aware of the existence of a 'Social Question.' They and their spiritual descendants, such as Marcella, begin to bring to social questions the enthusiasm and devotion which Flora M'Ivor, Di Vernon, and Catharine

Seyton lavished upon the last cause of the Stuarts. One may not sympathise wholly with that cause, but its adherents are more interesting as heroines, by virtue of their ardour and devotion, than the Edith Bellendens and Lucy Ashtons of the more 'domestic' type.

B.—You must certainly admit that there is more picturesqueness in the 'lost cause,' with which you have so little sympathy, than in Marcella's rather wrong-headed tilting against windmills in the shape of existing game laws and tyrannical landlords.

X.—You never were quite fair to poor Marcella! Of course she made mistakes; the 'modern woman' makes many, and it would be strange if she did not, considering all things; but she makes fewer now than she did ten or twenty years ago; and it seems to me that it is better for us to make mistakes than to live, like the heroine of the eighteenth century, continually ignorant that outside 'the little wall around the place of peace . . . the wild grass to the horizon is torn up by the agony of men, and beat level by the drift of their life-blood.'

Fond as I am of Evelina, I consider that Marcella, with all her mistakes, is an infinitely nobler creature; and, if the novel may be said, like the drama, to 'hold up the mirror to the age,' then surely we may hope that, with groping and stumbling, perhaps, the women of the nineteenth century are climbing to higher levels than that which their sisters had reached a hundred years ago.—NORA.

PRIZE WINNER FOR JANUARY.

Mrs. Dutton, Hewcroft, Newcastle, Staffordshire.

SUBJECT FOR MARCH.

'Favourites,' with brief reasons. 1. Character, Fictitious. 2. Character, Historical. 3. Virtue. 4. Occupation. 5. Amusement. 6. Quotation or Proverb.

SECOND SHELF.

PROSE COMPETITION FOR JANUARY.

A British Sunday Scholar.

Naughty boys have evidently left the clearest impressions on the brains, if not on the hearts, of the Sunday Teachers who have sent in papers. Chelsea China owns to a preference for the good ones. What a long list she could compile of both sorts! C., with the grey eyes, who puzzled her with hard questions. Beautiful L., whose existence was a pleasure. F., the excellent prig, who said, 'Miss, your class is worth attending, as *you* CAN teach.' M., who said, 'She'd throw the Bible at her teacher' (N.B.—She didn't). E., who left school 'because she didn't come there to be asked questions.' The good girls, and the dull girls, and the bright girls, and the naughty girls; the girls who consisted apparently of hair and hat, the disappointments and the pleasant surprises. Peace be with their memories! If they remember their teacher half as kindly as she remembers them, then will Sunday afternoons be bright spots in their recollections after all.

The work in the papers is very equal, so that it is difficult to assign the prize. But on the whole *Tilford Weir* takes the prize. It is terse, lively, and well put into shape. *Undine* is added, not for competition.

'JONES,' A BRITISH SUNDAY SCHOOL SCHOLAR.

JONES is in my class of boys at St. ——'s Sunday School. He is a thin, fair boy of eleven or twelve, who would be rather nice-looking if he were clean. But Jones is never clean.

Jones does not wear a collar; he has instead a red comforter wound round his neck, and the gay ends just appear under his shabby brown jacket, which is always tightly buttoned across his narrow chest. He wears corderoy trousers, which have evidently descended from an elder Jones, and heavy laced boots.

Jones's mother keeps a little provision shop, and I am sorry to say it is open all Sunday. In the window may be seen a choice assortment of vegetables, pipes, oranges, and apples, unwholesome-looking cakes, and sweets. If Jones partakes of these sweets, no wonder he looks unhealthy. His mother is a hard-worked, weary-looking woman, and there is a large family, who all bear a strong family likeness to each other, from the eldest son, who has just 'listed,' to a tiny individual of ten months, whom Jones proudly designates as 'his baby.' Boys are often tenderer nurses to their little brothers and sisters than girls are, and Jones is no exception to the rule. No doubt the recording angel is aware of this good trait in Jones's character.

Jones has two weaknesses, which he shares with many of the younger boys in the school. He weeps very readily, and he is a terrible 'tell tale.' I scarcely ever come to school without seeing one or other of the boys leaning against the gate, with his face hidden in his arms, shedding tears. And I am generally greeted with an eager voice, telling me of somebody else's sins. It is very difficult to arouse a sense of honour in these boys, especially as the one of whom the tale is told, as a rule, listens with interest and unconcern. Perhaps he feels rather distinguished at the notice he is receiving; perhaps he is comforted, knowing how soon he will probably be able to turn tables.

Jones has another special weakness. He is exceedingly self-satisfied. Nothing can abash him. He has a certain amount of inaccurate Biblical knowledge, acquired at week-day and Sunday schools, and also a large stock of little pious phrases, with which he seeks to impress his teachers. He is very fond of showing off, and is ever ready with a cheerful 'Yes, teacher,' 'No, teacher,' 'I know, teacher,' almost before the question is asked. Sometimes the answer fits in correctly, sometimes it is so obviously a snap-shot, that even the other boys in the class laugh at him. Still Jones does not blush—he only grins.

Sometimes, if Jones considers the reproof he has received unmerited, he turns his back (as much as he dare) on his teacher, and openly and visibly sulks. But, as a rule, he is very good-tempered and susceptible to kindness. Jones does not like to be behindhand in any little attention to the teacher. If one of the boys present her with a small nosegay of flowers, Jones will instantly take his one faded flower from his buttonhole and do likewise. It may be the hard law of necessity which has taught Jones to take such care of number one. Anyhow, it is a fact that he does so successfully. If some of the boys are invited to my house, Jones is certain to arrive, whether he is asked or not, and so equally sure of a welcome, that I am almost persuaded I must have asked him after all! If the boys in Jones's pew behave badly in church, Jones himself escapes punishment. If there is a rumour that carol singers have been favourably received at a certain house in the neighbourhood, Jones and Co. will hurry up at the first opportunity to repeat the performance, and it will not be *his* fault if he is not rewarded.

Poor little Jones! Perhaps he is the least attractive of all the boys in my class. Yet, when we think of his home training, what can we expect of him? Perhaps, after all, if he were not so self-satisfied, he would be discontented

with his poor circumstances, and we cannot blame too much his self-assertion, for it will keep him from being trodden down in the battle of life. There are possibilities in Jones that no one can know but his Maker. He is the heir of all the ages. He has an immortal soul—what will become of it?

What will you be like ten years hence, Jones? Is there any one who will take a true interest in you? Who will say of you, as was said of a boy hundreds of years ago, 'How shall I go up to my Father, and the lad be not with me?' As I am thinking of Jones, I meet him in the street. His thin face brightens with a broad smile of welcome. He plants himself directly in front of me, so that I *must* notice him.

'Good morning, teacher!'

'Good morning, Jones!'

TILFORD WEIR.

THE INCORRIGIBLE.

'Who is that boy kneeling in the corner?' asked Hetty.

'That, miss, is the most incorrigible youth in the school,' said the schoolmaster.

He was a handsome little boy of nine, with good features, rosy cheeks, and bright blue eyes, comfortably dressed in the short tunic and leather belt of the period. His name was Dick.

Hetty was young, and the position of rector's daughter was new to her. She was given a big class of little boys, and the 'incorrigible' was in it. She trembled before that class; she spent many hours in preparing the 'Life of Moses' for its edification; and it interested her—oh, *how* interesting the boys were! How individual and how dear! Especially the 'incorrigible.' He was always good when he was being taught, though never at any other time; and he asked questions which went to the very heart of mystical theology. It was remarked at head-quarters that Hetty was getting educated, whatever her class might be. Circumstances withdrew her from this first wonderful class, but her intercourse with Dick continued till he and the school came to a final split, and his start in life became imminent.

His mother kept a laundry, his father was a gardener. 'A Churchman? yes, miss; leastways, he don't attend no other place of worship; and would look in at church of an evening if he weren't too busy.' Dick became an errand-boy, 'but he went so audacious to customers' that the village shop couldn't stand him. And all the while he had the most charming manners. When Hetty went to condole with his mother on his misdeeds, he entertained her with agreeable small talk, and always ran to open the gate, and took off his cap when she spoke to him. And his little brothers adored him. He didn't *mean* to be good on land, because he wanted to go to sea. The family had such strong characters. His elder brother 'has set his heart on *butchering*, Miss; he says he'd rather sit up at night and *butch* than sleep in his bed; though a kinder-'arted nor a gentler lad never stepped!'

This youth became a butcher, and the 'incorrigible,' having found out all about the conditions for entering the Royal Navy for himself, ran away, and joined it the very day he was old enough, and had found by measurement that he was big enough. At first he did well, and then came a hiatus. Something happened, and 'he left the navy.' His mother was found in tears, broken-hearted; 'I couldn't tell *you*, miss, what has happened.'

And Hetty never knew what happened; but she wrote her old scholar the best letter she could frame, which the mother undertook 'to forward;' and perhaps it did as well as if she had known *how* incorrigible poor Dick had proved.

An interval, and she heard that he had gone into business with an uncle. Another interval, and she returned home after an absence.

'Oh, Hetty, what do you think? The "incorrigible's" baby is to be christened to-day!'

Hetty flew to the church; and there was the 'incorrigible' in a frock coat and a tall hat—handsome as ever, evidently well-to-do, and presumably well conducted—with a nice young wife, and a beautiful baby, which he had made a point of bringing to be christened at 'the old church,' in which Sunday after Sunday he had earned bad marks in the days of his youth.

He glowed with smiles at the sight of Hetty, thanked her most courteously for all past kindness; and she presented the baby with the handsomest Prayer-book she could possibly afford to buy.

And that is the last that Hetty has seen of her first Sunday scholar.

Processions of 'incorrigibles' have walked through the schoolrooms in which her lot has since been cast. Oh dear, how common-place they are, how like each other, and how unlike Dick!—UNDINE.

CLASS LIST FOR JANUARY.

DISTINCTION.—*Humdrum.*

CLASS I.

E. V. B., Try Again, Molly, Holly Leaf, Hay, The Brown Bear, Truda, Skena Vaw, J. E. M.

CLASS II.

Dorothy Lewis, Lindum, A. C. R., Dora Evans, Topsy, Miss Oldfield.

PRIZE WINNER FOR JANUARY.

Miss E. M. Ware, Briarfield, Ethelbert Road, Canterbury.

CHARACTER STUDY FOR MARCH.

A Pony.

WHO, WHEN, AND WHERE?

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR JANUARY.

(*All connected with one subject.*)

1. Where are these lines?—

'Peaceful was the night
Wherein the Prince of light,
His reign of peace upon the earth began.

2. When is it said that 'the bird of dawning singeth all night long'?

3. What was the business that Marley's ghost had neglected while on earth?

4. Who was controlled by

'The merry, merry bells of Yule,'

and who heard the bells on Christmas Day—

'Their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat,
Of peace on earth, goodwill to men'?

5. What was the end of the fir-tree that had been a Christmas-tree, and had heard the story of Humpty-Dumpty?

6. Give one favourite quotation on the subject of these questions. (It may be in verse or prose, but must be short.)

ANSWERS TO JANUARY QUESTIONS.

(*All on the subject of Christmas.*)

1. In MILTON'S 'Hymn on Christ's Nativity,' v. 5.

2.

'Ever 'gainst that season comes,
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
This bird of dawning singeth all night long.'

(SHAKESPEARE, *Hamlet*, act i. sc. 2.)

2. 'Mankind was my business; the common welfare was my business; charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence, were all my business.' (DICKENS, 'Christmas Carol,' stave 1.)

4. (*a*) TENNYSON, 'In Memoriam,' canto 28. (*b*) LONGFELLOW, 'Christmas Bells,' v. 1.

5. 'It was chopped into small faggots, made into a bundle, and burnt to ashes.' (HANS C. ANDERSEN'S 'Tales,' 'The Fir Tree.')

CORRECT ANSWERS RECEIVED.

Athena, Blue Wings, Bog-Myrtle, Cobwebs, Cymraes, Eleanor, E. V. B., F. R. D., Hay, Honeylands, Iona, Irnham, Isabel, Lenore, Melton Mowbray, R. V. H., Tara, The Blue Cat, Trimmer, W. Adey, White Cat, W. Spurling, 60; *A. C. R., Aspley Guise, E. T., Double-Dummy, Helen, Holly Leaf, Klee, Mesech, Nevil, Sea-Maiden, S. Millord, Syndicate, Thorshaven,* 59; *Dianora, Kittiwake,* 58; *Gruffanuff,* 57; Εγκρατεια, *Malaprop,* 55; *All-Fours, Bumble, Ellen Vannin, Hexagon, Nemo, Proserphina, Sintram,* 54; *A. E. L., E. Cripps, Lambda,* 51; *Findhorn, No.* 13, *Stonechat,* 50; *Daisy,* 46; *Klondyke,* 43; *F. J. A.,* 39; *Undine,* and one unsigned (*M. R. A.*?), 35.

Bice.—As you are a new contributor, you are allowed 48 marks; but you omitted to write 'Search Questions' outside your envelope.

Several marks are lost this month by incomplete references. 'Chapter and verse' should always be given.

Ellen Vannin. Chelsea China is glad to welcome you, and thank you for your kind wishes.

Cymraes. Only a misprint!

Fourteen Streams has 16 marks for December.

Melton Mowbray is allowed 6 more marks, as the quotation from ADAM LINDSAY GORDON is exact, and answers the question as well as the one from SCOTT. It was given by some other competitors and is as follows:—

'Round that neck where pearls look dusky,
Let me once more wind my arm.'

A. L. GORDON, 'Podas Okus,' v. 17.

Several well-known quotations have been given in answer to question 6, but none of special interest. They have all received full marks, regardless of merit, as only 'a favourite' was asked for.

The Half-yearly Prize is won by *Melton Mowbray*, with a score of 212 out of 216; her name and address are—Miss F. SANDERS, Whimple Rectory, Exeter.

Other scores over 200 are, *Dianora,* 210; *Cymraes* and *W. Adey,* 208; *Athena,* 206; *E. T., Mesech, The Bratchet,* 202.

NOTICE.—Answers (to SEARCH QUESTIONS only) to be sent by the 25th of each month to *Miss Pridham, Westmoreland Lodge, Wimbledon Park, Wimbledon.* 'Search Questions' to be written outside the envelope. All other competitions as usual.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR MARCH.

(*All about one Flower*).

1. Who said—

'*They*
Came before the swallow dares and fill
The winds of March with beauty'?

2. For what purpose were our flowers called upon to 'fill their cups with tears'?

3. (*a*) Who looked like one of these flowers in her college gown? (*b*) How were the stars when this 'shining' flower died?

4. Who said that we 'weep to see' our flowers 'haste away so soon'?

5. Whose heart filled with pleasure and danced with these flowers?

6. A quotation on this flower. (Marks according to merit.)

THIRD SHELF.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

Quotations wanted.—

'It is an ancient saying, that the ruby
Brings gladness to the wearer, and preserves
The heart pure, and if laid beneath the pillow,
Drives away evil dreams.'

The Spanish Student, Act 1, Scene 3 (Longfellow).—*E. Hinton.*

'O righteous doom, that they who make
Pleasure their only end,
Forsaking duty for her sake,
Love that whereto they tread;
While they who . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
Find pleasure by way.'

I believe the lines are by Trench.—*E. Hinton.*

Wanted.—The name and author of a poem or poems about King Charles the First and Second, and King James the First and Second.—*Daisy-bud.*

ANSWERS.

Fortunatus.—Two more lines of F. A. Butler's poem are—

'Look on it, lift it, bear it solemnly,
Stand up and walk beneath it steadfastly.'

'Lines to a young gentleman leaving the Lenox Academy, Massachusetts. Probably to be found in F. A. Butler's 'Journal of a Visit to the United States,' published 1835.—R. V. H.

Grannie.—'Abbey Church, or Self-control and Self-conceit,' was the first tale published by Miss Yonge. It can be obtained from Messrs. Macmillan. —CHELSEA CHINA.

The *exact* chronological order of Miss Yonge's novels and tales, not as she wrote them, but as the characters work in with each other, is as follows:—

'Hopes and Fears,' 'Castle Builders,' 'Stokesley Secret,' 'Daisy Chain, 'Scenes and Characters,' 'Pillars of the House,' 'Countess Kate,' 'The Trial,' 'Beechcroft at Rockstone,' 'Strolling Players,'* 'The Long Vacation' (this is calculated from dates given in 'Pillars of the House,' combined with various mentions of Lancelot Underwood, who was thirty-eight in 'Long Vacation'), 'Robert Fulmort,' 'Kate, Lady Liddesdale,' 'David Merrifield,' 'Gertrude May,' and 'Lady Caergwent.' In a short paper, 'Come to her Kingdom,' in 'More Byewords,' something is told of the Merrifields; and Louis and Mary, of 'Dynevor Terrace,' come into 'Beechcroft at Rockstone.' The series counting from 'Robert Fulmort,' being six years old in 'Hopes and Fears,' covers a period of fifty-seven years, the 'Daisy Chain' commencing twenty-seven years later than that first date.

Another series of characters, and their descendants, come into 'The Chaplet of Pearls,' 'Stray Pearls,' 'The Reputed Changeling,' and 'The Release.'—A LOVER OF THE UNDERWOODS.

In answer to *Lambda.*

'A green Yule makes a fat churchyard.'

'Si Sol splendescat Maria Purificante
Major erit glacies post ille quam suit ante.'—February 2nd.

'Saint Matthias brings leaf and grass.'—February 24th.

'Saint Bartholomew brings cold dew.'—August 24th.

'Valentine if he be fine, half the winter's left behind;
Valentine if he be foul, half the winter's gone at Yule.'—February 14th.

'Barnaby bright—the longest day and shortest night.'—June 11th (old style).

'If St. Paul be bright and clear, it doth betide a happy year;
But if it chance to snow or rain, then will be dear all kinds of grain.'

M. C. M.

MONTHLY PACKET SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF MISSIONS.

SUBJECT FOR FIRST QUARTER: SOUTH AFRICA.

QUESTIONS FOR MARCH.

9. Mention and locate the six or seven chief races into which the African people may be divided, with a dozen of the principal languages used, and three or four lines each on the characters of the races.

10. Describe more minutely the Kafir and Zulu race, with an account of the beginning of the missions at Springvale, Kwamagwaza, Isandhlwana, and any one other Zulu or Kafir station.

11. An account of Bishop Macrorie's episcopate in Natal, showing the special difficulties.

12. Show the particular connection of England and Englishmen with the dioceses of Bloemfontein and Pretoria, giving a history of our mission work in one or the other.

Books recommended:—*Digest of S.P.G. Records*; *Under His Banner*; *Africa Waiting* (specially for Question 9); *Historical Sketches*: '*Natal and Zululand*,' *and* '*Grahamstown and Kaffraria*' (S.P.G., 1*d.* each); *Memorials of Henrietta Robertson* (out of print); *The English Church in Other Lands.*

Answers to be sent to Bogoak Industrial School, Andover, by April 1st.

Subscriptions received from 'M.P.' and *Constans et Fidelis*, besides those given last month.

* Written jointly with C. R. Coleridge.

'MONTHLY PACKET' NOTICES.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The readers of the 'Monthly Packet' are invited to address CHELSEA CHINA on any subject the discussion of which occurs to them as likely to interest others, especially in connection with articles appearing in the Magazine.

CHINA CUPBOARD PRIZES—

A. *Variety Specimens.* Prize, monthly, 5*s.*

Search Questions (*Who, When, and Where*). Prize, for six months taken together, £1 1*s.*

Prose Competition. Monthly Prize, 5*s.*, or 10*s.*, according to merit.

RULES for the above—

(1) Papers must be sent by the 25th of each month, addressed to CHELSEA CHINA, care of Messrs. A. D. Innes & Co.; they must NOT be addressed to 'the Editors.' (2) Each envelope must be marked *outside* with the subject to which it refers. Papers under separate competitions or discussions must be in separate envelopes. (3) The correspondent's name and address must be written on every paper: the use of a *nom de plume* for the lists is optional. (4) If competitors fail to comply with any rule, their papers will be disqualified. (5) The real name of the prize-winner is published in each case. (6) There are no entrance fees. (7) Prizes cannot be taken by the same person twice in a half-year.

C. *Church History Society.* Prizes of books are given. In value and number, these depend on the number of entries. They are given for the year's work, but Competitors who have only taken six months *may* have a prize awarded.

RULES.—I. This Society is open to all readers of the Magazine, by payment of an annual FEE of 1*s.* II. Questions are set each month.

No China Cupboard papers can be returned.

PROVERB COMPETITION, 1898.

It appears to us that a set subject fails to attract authors of experience, or to elicit their best work. We therefore cordially invite stories for next year's Christmas Number to be sent in without limit of subject, to be chosen according to merit and paid for in the usual manner. The PROVERB COMPETITION is limited to authors under 25.

All stories not to exceed 10,000 words, to be sent in between June 1st and July 1st, 1898. Proverb stories to be headed PROVERB COMPETITION, CHRISTMAS NUMBER, outside the wrapper, other stories CHRISTMAS NUMBER only. Stamped cover or stamps to be enclosed for return.

Illustrate this quotation in a story—

> 'Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
> The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
> Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
> And, by opposing, end them.'

[*The Editors of the 'Monthly Packet' will feel obliged if All Contributors will write their names and addresses clearly on their MSS., and will enclose stamps for return. Unless these conditions are complied with, the Editors cannot undertake to preserve, return, or enter into correspondence about MSS. Much trouble is saved if accompanying letters are enclosed in the parcel instead of being sent separately.*

The utmost care is taken in returning MSS., but the Editors can only hold themselves absolutely responsible for such as are sent to them at their own request.]

THE MONTHLY PACKET.

NEW SERIES.

APRIL, 1898.

THE GOSPEL WRIT IN STEEL.

BY ARTHUR PATERSON, AUTHOR OF 'FATHER AND SON,' 'FOR FREEDOM'S SAKE,' ETC.

CHAPTER X.

IN the United States work is spelt with a capital W. The business competition in the towns, and the strain in the country of producing the largest possible crops at the smallest possible cost, keeps the brains and bodies of men at full stretch all the year round. Holidays are almost unknown. Under such circumstances it is not surprising to find that in charitable enterprises women usually take the first place. The names of men appear in prospectuses, and men grace the chair at public meetings, for men have money. But there have been few philanthropic schemes, large or small, in the States for the past forty years in which women have not borne the chief responsibility and held the power. In Chippewa this was as much the case as elsewhere. Whether it was a soup kitchen in a hard winter, free breakfasts for tramps after a prayer-meeting—to assist their conversion—or the management and distribution of supplies for the wounded at the time of the war, such matters were under one manager, and only one, Mrs. Haniman, the minister's wife. Mrs. Haniman did not work alone. She always had a committee, of which Luke Selby was usually chairman; and out of that committee Mrs. Haniman contrived to get both work and money; but she was its guiding spirit, and no person, or persons combined, ever dreamed of questioning any action that she might think fit to take. It goes without

saying that Mrs. Haniman was a woman of character, and a born organiser. But she was a great deal more than this. Public life and public work, of one sort or another, was the breath of her existence; and it was her firm conviction that the highest destiny for any woman was a commanding influence in public affairs. Mrs. Haniman was childless, and, though by no means a child-hater, it was her custom to point out to all who came under her influence that while there were undoubtedly certain women who were best fitted for the care and up-bringing of families, every woman who had brains, energy, and ambition should consider her domestic affairs secondary to the welfare of the community at large. This doctrine she preached in season and out of season, more especially to young girls, with results that were, at times, astonishing, and not invariably what she approved herself. Her aptest pupil was Jean. Since Jean's childhood, despite mild protests from Mrs. Selby and very vigorous ones from Mrs. Burletson, Mrs. Haniman had steadily worked upon the ambitious side of the girl's nature, and as she grew to womanhood a desire for public work and the welfare of those around her—in the mass—became her ruling passion. In all things she had been Mrs. Haniman's loyal disciple, until at length her own native energy and will enabled her to strike out a path of her own. Since the fall of Fort Sumter, for instance, Jean had out-done even Mrs. Haniman in her enthusiasm for the war, and exercised a far greater influence in inducing men to volunteer—thanks, perhaps, to her youth and good looks—than her teacher. No one was more pleased at this than Mrs. Haniman. There was not a particle of petty pride in her nature. Her only regret was that there were not a score of Jeans. Mrs. Haniman was one of the warmest approvers of Jean's engagement to Seth. She had known John from childhood, and was too shrewd not to read the character of the man, in spite of all his gentleness. Jean, from Mrs. Haniman's point of view, could never grow to the full stature Providence intended for woman if she married a man stronger than herself. As Seth's wife, she would take the lead and be in a woman's rightful place—in command. All that Jean needed now, in Mrs. Haniman's opinion, was full scope for her energies; and no sooner were the ranks of the volunteer regiments filled up, and the feelings and patriotism sufficiently worked upon of every man in the neighbourhood of Chippewa who could reasonably be expected to enlist, than the creation of a new

work, in which Jean should take a leading part, began to agitate Mrs. Haniman's mind, and the day after Seth departed again for the war she called at the store to propound it.

It was ten o'clock in the morning, and, to Mrs. Haniman's surprise, Jean was in the kitchen cleaning the stove. It turned out that Mrs. Selby, after rising as usual at five, had been obliged to return to her bed with a very severe headache, and that Jean had stepped into the breach. Upon the confusion caused by this untoward incident, Mrs. Haniman came—a tall, commanding woman, with a fresh-coloured face, aquiline features, prominent blue eyes, and a deep voice. It was a fine voice, and musical, but was marred by a curious monotony of tone. It was said by many, that while Mrs. Haniman's opinions were always distinctly and impressively delivered, she was apt not to hear those of other people.

'My dear, this is very unfortunate for you,' she said, after she had been told about Mrs. Selby's illness. 'I have come to see you about a matter of great importance, and to which you must give me your undivided attention.'

Jean looked despairingly at her hands.

'I should like to hear about it of all things, but you can see how I am placed. I must fly round all I know, or there will be a scrap dinner for father, and bread and molasses for the children. It just happens, of course, because mother is sick there is nothing cooked in the house. I could manage an hour this afternoon.'

Mrs. Haniman smiled. Her face did not look so pleasant when she smiled, perhaps because smiling was not natural to her.

'My dear,' she said, laying her umbrella upon the kitchen table, 'I would not have come at this hour if any other would have suited me. I must write twenty letters at least before five o'clock. No; we will talk now. I will tell your father myself, on my way out, that he must be content with cold fare to-day; and, as for the children, how many a poor man's child has to be content all the year round with hunks of bread and molasses? My business is too important for delay. Listen here.'

Mrs. Haniman drew from a neat leather bag a letter, written by a lady in Chicago, the wife of a newspaper editor, and a woman of position and power, one of the first organisers of the great 'Sanitary Commission.' Some one had told her of Mrs. Haniman, and she wrote to suggest that a sub-depôt should be established at Chippewa for the collection and distribution of

comforts and necessaries for the wounded soldiers; and she wanted to know whether Mrs. Haniman would organise, and make herself responsible for, the management of this depôt. The writer concluded by cordially inviting Mrs. Haniman to visit Chicago, to talk over and arrange all the details of the scheme.

'I am bound to go,' Mrs. Haniman said; 'but I can only see this thing through if you will work it with me. No one woman will ever be able to take charge of all that will come, if the idea gets hold upon our folk—which I am sure it will. No one but you has the brains and the backbone to run it. We will have no men fooling around. They may give—they shall give money; but the work will be too responsible for them. Will you take it?'

Jean's answer lay in the brightness of her face.

'Yes, indeed, yes, a hundred times. But am I smart enough and strong enough? You must not judge me by yourself. Tell me what it amounts to.'

'Why, just this,' Mrs. Haniman answered, with the precision of a woman of business, none of her enthusiasm visible either in face or manner, 'we have sent the boys to the war, you know, we women. Warfare means the giving of wounds and death. It is our duty, I take it, our particular duty, to see that everything is done that can be done for our wounded men. Of course, there are surgeons and hospitals; but, as might have been expected, the doctors are careless and worse, and the hospitals not fit for sick cattle. How is this to be changed? Who is to change it? You have the answer in this letter. The women, the women of the Union. Not one or two, but *all;* working together in a compact organisation. We will have first to make appeals; but that will be easy. Read the account of what goes on in hospital and in camp. The railways carry troops to the front and leave them there, after a journey of twenty-four hours, without a bite of food or a drop of water. When the food comes it is often bad, and only fit for a hog. As for the sick, the boys are writing to say that the hospitals are so miserable they won't go into them. You remember what Seth told us about the difficulty he found in getting water when he was sick, and how that was dirty—yet that was a hospital in Washington. The sheds at the front they call by the name of hospitals are in the hands of doctors, many of whom drink, I am told; while, as for nurses, they will have none yet.'

'A nurse!' Jean cried. 'That is what I would like to be best of all. A nurse at the front—within sound of the guns.'

Mrs. Haniman smiled her peculiar smile.

'Is that your ambition? You will get it, I hope; but wait a bit. There is work at home to your hand. I am told the men —these doctors—say nothing is required; that hospitals for forty where there are a thousand sick; stores of food rotting away where there is no one to eat it; starvation, or near it, where the army lays, is right and reasonable. Why do they say it? Because only politics, fighting, and dollar-hunting interest men. It is time we women took hold. That is what this lady means by a Sanitary Commission. Every big town in our State will have its sub-depôt for stores, and form a local aid society of women, which will be directly in communication with the Commission. We will find out what things are most needed, appeal for them, pack them, and start 'em for the front. There will be medicines, and warm clothing, and any kind of useful, comforting things folk have to give. There is the work. Will you take it up with me?'

'Most willingly.'

'I will write to-day, then, and go to Chicago next week, leaving the work I have in hand just now with you. When I get back we will start a store-room and committee. Now I must go.'

Mrs. Haniman rose with a brisk nod, and walked away thoroughly satisfied with herself and her morning's work. Luke was of a different opinion when he found a dry and scanty dinner awaiting him; the children complained sadly at bread and molasses—all Jean could find for them; and Mrs. Selby wept bitterly in her room upstairs. She had felt unwell for some weeks, and was haunted by a gnawing anxiety about herself. Her doctor refused to say what was the matter. 'It may be only temporary,' he said, 'we must wait and see. Meantime keep you quiet, and take things easily.' But his looks had belied his soothing words, and the events of this day were a climax to Mrs. Selby's woes. What would happen to her little ones if she were to become unable to care for their comfort and well-being? It was clear to her that Jean was not to be depended upon.

This opinion might have been modified if Mrs. Selby had seen the tremendous efforts Jean made to provide an extra good supper for her family this evening, and put the house in order. But she did not see it, and the next day rose from her

bed, despite the doctor, and quietly turned Jean out. Jean hardly noticed at the time how ill her mother looked. Her thoughts by day and her dreams by night were of the Sanitary Commission and the best possible way of helping to bring comfort and relief to thousands of heroic suffering men. She wrote daily to Mrs. Haniman, and received long letters in return, full of accounts of the great doings in Chicago. Upon Mrs. Haniman's return, the work began, and early and late Jean sat upon a straight-backed office chair, and wrote letters by the hour, or was on her feet the whole day in the store-room, unpacking and re-packing boxes of clothing, inspecting canned fruit and canned meats, and sorting out baskets of toys and boxes of candy, these last sent mostly by children to amuse the hospital patients' leisure hours. It was hard work, and became harder as the volume of the business grew with rapid strides; and to send 'somethin' away to the boys' became a ruling passion in every Union household, regardless of whether that 'somethin'' was likely to be of any use. The self-denial and devotion of the poorer folk was very touching. Here the wife of a labourer brought her husband's spare shirts, with the remark that 'he'd said they could go, and he'd chance gettin' more come winter-time;' there an old couple handed in a pair of fat chickens 'to be biled for broth; they are all we can spare—we ain't got no money to give.' One small boy, the raggedest of street urchins, contributed five cents a week regularly, and when told that he should buy himself a pair of shoes first, for he was bare-foot, replied with scorn, 'Shucks! what I give yer I spend on terbacker; but I reckon them boys want it more than me. I'll do without it till the Rebs climb down!' Queer articles of clothing would arrive sometimes, from boot-laces and hair-combs to knee-breeches and dress-shirts. Delicacies of a perishable nature, such as honey and fresh fruits, came in from long distances, and caused much tribulation to the committee. On the other hand, grateful letters from 'the boys' were delightful to read; the demand from the army increased faster than the supply; while the authorities became less and less antagonistic to the scheme as they found that its indefatigable promoters were doing their best to be business-like and practical, and induce the public to send what was needed at the front, instead of what it did not want at home.

But these things were more easily promised than performed. Jean often said to Mrs. Haniman that until she took up this

work she had not a notion that there were so many foolish people in the Union as she now found in Northern Wisconsin. When the committee gained experience, it began to find that firm refusal and prompt return of all unnecessary and useless gifts was essential to the credit of the Commission; and the storm of indignation from the donors of these gifts which fell upon Jean, as the committee's secretary, was very wearing. Then Jean worked far too hard. All through the rest of the summer she laboured without respite or holiday. Even when winter came, and she caught a chill, she refused to take any care of herself, and developed a cough, which lasted until the spring, and gave her mother much anxiety. Yet nothing was to be done, for no persuasions and arguments could convince Jean that her health was of any importance compared to her work. Mrs. Haniman never rested; why should she? The boys were fighting and suffering in Virginia; it would be mean and cowardly to relax efforts on their behalf at home. Mrs. Selby, in her distress and perplexity, was so seriously concerned about the matter that she consulted her husband. But she received no sympathy there.

'My good Martha, you are over-anxious. I have my eyes open, and can see Jean is not so stout as she was, but my belief is that the work ain't at the bottom of it. She is not happy. She is restless all the time; the work is good so far, for it employs her mind. My notion is quite a different one from yours. It is in my head, between ourselves, that if the Lord in His mercy should see fit to send that boy Seth to a better world, Jean, when the shock has passed, would be a different girl. I will have nothing, anyway, said against this work. It is the best the women in this country every tried to do. By-the-by, have you heard that John Burletson is selling horses to the Government? That man, my dear, is coining money. I always knew he would. As to Jean, we have no reason to be dissatisfied with our little girl.'

Luke himself had not, indeed. He had never done so brisk a trade as since the day 'the Sanitary' was established. Mrs. Selby after this went on her way in silence anxiously watching Jean, and bearing with dumb patience her own slowly, but surely, increasing ill-health. She made no complaint, and only her doctor knew how much she suffered at times; though, thanks to a marvellous constitution, she was able, and would be for a long time, to do her part for her children and her house.

A day came at length when even Jean felt that her present work was undermining health and nerve, without adequate results, and decided to give it up. The decision, which cost her many sleepless nights, she determined to communicate first of all to Mrs. Haniman. Mrs. Haniman, somewhat to Jean's surprise, received the announcement as if she had expected it, though with a deep sigh.

'You have been our right hand, my dear, and we can ill spare you; but if it has to be it must. What shall you do with your free hours?'

'I am going to train for a nurse, and go to the front as soon as I may.'

'What! Go to the war?' And Mrs. Haniman looked at her in blank astonishment.

'Yes; I was reading accounts of the need they had for nurses, and how many girls were training, and I felt I must go too. It has been an idea of mine for a very long time. I hoped you would have approved.'

'I do—I do, decidedly,' Mrs. Haniman replied with emphasis, yet with a reservation in her tone Jean could not understand. 'But what has your father to say about it, and your mother? Your mother most of all.'

'I have not told them yet, but I do not expect any difficulty there. They never interfere with any plans of mine.'

Mrs. Haniman coughed and assented, then absently played with her pen and remained silent as if in deep thought. This proposition of Jean's placed her in a very awkward position. The girl's plan would answer her most cherished purpose, for the work of the committee would be strengthened tenfold by the presence of an agent on the spot. On the other hand, not twenty-four hours ago she had made a promise which it was incumbent upon her to keep, and which charged her to say certain things that might entirely change Jean's plans. After a pause she remarked—

'I don't know any one who would make a better nurse. I think it is the career that fits you best. But the opinion has been expressed to me, and I have promised that you should know it, that your mother is too sick for you to leave your home or even to stay by us for the Sanitary.'

'Mother—sick? She has never told me! What is the matter?'

'I cannot say,' Mrs. Haniman said with a curious reticence.

'I should not have remarked it myself. I tell you what I am told.'

Who told you?

'A friend who knows, or thinks she knows, a great deal about such things. I hardly like mentioning her name after what has passed.'

'I must know it, please.'

'John Burletson's mother.'

Jean flushed fierily.

'Did you ask for her authority? Why does she interfere? I don't mean to be disrespectful; but why did she not come herself and—and what business is it of hers anyway?'

Mrs. Haniman pursed her lips and shook her head.

'Mrs. Burletson said to me——' she went on.

'Thank you, I would rather not hear what she said,' Jean interposed warmly, 'I do not put any weight at all upon evidence that comes so very second hand. If you know of your own knowledge something about mother that I do not, I will be glad if you will tell me; but not what Mrs. Burletson says.'

'I have told you,' Mrs. Haniman rejoined in her monotonous tone, 'I know nothing. It is what I have been informed.'

'Then that settles it. If anything had been really wrong, mother would have let me know. We need not go into it further.'

Mrs. Haniman played with her pen again, then she said—

'What, my dear, is it your purpose to do?'

'The course you approved, which I had determined upon. I can assure you I have quite made up my mind.'

Soon after this Jean went home. But Mrs. Haniman did no more work that evening.

'I did my duty,' she said to herself many times. 'I could not tell her all because she would not listen, and she will do more good by being away—good to herself and to others. Why should her life be absorbed with the care of children and a sick mother? The future of our work here is assured. I have done right—I have done right.'

CHAPTER XI.

THE next day Mrs. Haniman put off two engagements, and left unanswered a formidable mass of correspondence to make time for a visit to Mrs. Burletson.

'I wanted you to know, Sarah,' she said, 'and from my own lips, that I spoke to Jean last night about her mother.'

Mrs. Burletson nodded approvingly.

'That was right. What did she say?'

Mrs. Haniman folded her hands in her lap, and slightly but distinctly raised her voice.

'You will remember that Jean's mind and heart have been bent since she was a child upon a life of devotion to her fellow-creatures. When she came last night to resign her position in the Sanitary——'

'She did so!' Mrs. Burletson exclaimed. 'Good girl; noble girl. I have misjudged her.'

Mrs. Haniman coughed.

'Wait one moment. Jean has resigned, and with my full approval, so that she may receive the necessary training as a nurse before she goes to serve in a hospital at the seat of war.'

All this Mrs. Haniman said in her deepest and most impressive manner, as if anxious that her listener should not fail to understand the full significance of every word. Mrs. Burletson's teeth closed with a snap.

'What did you say to her then?'

'I kept my promise. I told her what you had said about her mother. She asked who had spoken so. I mentioned your name. What she said then I will not repeat. Her last words were, "I will go to the war; I have quite made up my mind."'

'Did you tell her what Doctor Selliger said?'

'I mentioned what you said. I have not seen him.'

'You know what he told me.'

'Maybe I do, Sarah; but you must remember that since John saw fit to draw back from volunteering, the mention of his name or yours has a peculiarly contrary effect upon Jean. The more I brought you in, the more set she became to follow out her own idea.'

'My son, Martha Haniman, never drew back, and you know it perfectly well. They tried to push him where he refused to go.'

Mrs. Haniman gave a deprecating wave of the hand.

'I have not come to argue about John.'

'No,' Mrs. Burletson said; 'there you are wise. Now tell me again. Jean is going to leave home. What do her folk say?'

'When Jean has told me her mind,' Mrs. Haniman said complacently, 'I have never known her parents change it.'

'No,' Mrs. Burletson said, with an ominous quietness of tone; 'the child has had a bad education. Martha Selby never disciplined her any, or tried to teach—except by example—self-denial and self-control. Yet I am disappointed. I knew Jean was blind and headstrong; but that she could ever turn out heartless and wicked, I would never have believed—if you had not told me.'

Mrs. Haniman tapped her foot impatiently upon the floor.

'Such talk is pure foolishness. Jean has done right. I have written this day to a friend of mine in Washington who will advise in her training. You forget yourself, Sarah.'

'I say wicked,' Mrs. Burletson repeated, her voice still unnaturally quiet; 'I say it again. Her mother is dying, though very slowly. She may live yet for years, but inch by inch her life is leaving her. Yet in the face of that—of death itself—that girl can go away. You told Jean, of course, that her mother *was* dying? Answer me.'

Mrs. Haniman rose with dignity to take her leave.

'I have said I did my duty. That is enough.'

'Answer my question. Did you tell her the whole truth, or did you conceal any of it? No empty phrases; you are too fond of them. Tell me what you said.'

'I have told you all.'

'Then you concealed from Jean her mother's danger? I have done the child a wrong; thank God I have. But what shall I say to you, her friend whom she has followed for good and for evil—aye, for evil—all her life? No, you are not going yet; sit down again. I have more upon my tongue. Jean in herself is nothing to me now. The war craze, the glib talk of false advisers, turned her head, which never was well-balanced, until she chose to scorn my John, a man worth ten—though I, his mother, say it—of the one she promises to marry. From the time I knew this I have not cared to see her face. But her mother is my friend. You despise that woman. I happen to know she is one of the best living; and if it is in me she shall not be sacrificed to the mad whimsies of a war-sick girl. I may fail; likely I will. I am a woman of years, and infirm, and my temper is more infirm than my limbs; and young folk want guiding with a gentle hand. But whatever comes, I have learnt something I never thought to know. I have seen a woman professing the Christian religion, who goes forth in public print as a philanthropist—*you*, Martha Haniman—act in the way the

poorest of your husband's flock would be ashamed to act. What do you say? It is for the best? Jean's place is at the war? What has that to do with it? Did you tell the truth? You know you did not. Go home to your chamber. Humble your proud heart before the God that made you; then say whether your conscience approves a deliberate concealment from this girl that her mother is stricken with a mortal disease. Go, and let it be a long time before you come within my doors again.'

The old lady rose to her feet, her bent figure quivering, and her eyes flashing fire. Mrs. Haniman tried to speak, but at an imperious gesture from Mrs. Burletson shrank back, and went away without a word.

When John came home from work that evening he found his mother lying down, worn out. She told him what had passed, for they had no secrets from one another. Her eyes were softer now.

'I am not quite sure,' she said, in a doubtful tone, 'whether I did not drive my words too hard. I expected to see her turn upon me, but she left.'

John laughed.

'I should say, if you were to ask for my opinion, that this was all Mrs. Haniman had a chance to do. I would wager she was pleased to be in the fresh air, and I doubt whether her ears are not tingling now. Don't fret one little bit,' he added stoutly; 'you have not said too much. I would give anything to have it in me to command words as yours when I feel hot. But I cannot do it. Those which come to me are poor, and generally stick in my throat.'

'Martha Haniman is a good woman at heart,' Mrs. Burletson said; 'but oh, the harm, John, she has done your girl.'

'My girl! mother?'

'Boy, how thoughtless of me. No,' she said in a different tone; 'not yours, because not worthy.'

'There you are quite wrong.'

He spoke with some emphasis; but Mrs. Burletson was not in a mood to be contradicted.

'I say I am right, and I know it. Jean is not worthy to be your wife.'

'It is not just to speak so of her.'

'I speak of what I know.'

'You are hard, mother. Jean has done more than any one person for the boys at the war. When I saw her yesterday her

face was as white as paper. Even now she gives this up to go where all the ghastly horrors are, and work harder still among wounds, and disease, and death. Mother,' and his voice trembled with pent-up feeling, 'it is wonderful to me to see what strength of mind there is in little Jean. She has taught me what a woman can do, as you have taught me what a woman ought to be. If she goes to the war——'

'She has not gone yet,' Mrs. Burletson said, between her teeth.

'How can it be stopped now?'

'To-morrow morning, son John, if you are not too busy, I will ask you to drive me to town.'

'Town, mother! You have not been so far this six months.'

'Town, John. First we will go to Jabez Selliger. I told you what he said about Mrs. Selby. To-morrow he shall write that down. Then, sonny, we drive to the store.'

'You intend speaking to Jean?'

'She will have all my mind, John, and all the doctor's knowledge. If that is not enough to stop her, God have mercy upon her soul, and on Martha Haniman's—though that I very much doubt.'

John fidgeted in his chair.

'Jean—Jean has a high spirit, mother.'

Mrs. Burletson laughed.

'My dearest boy, I know that well. I will keep my temper, and hold my tongue, you may be sure. It is too serious. Besides, Jean, yet awhile at least, is not so far gone as Martha Haniman.'

When Mrs. Burletson saw Jean next day she noticed many unexpected changes in the young face, and her voice was softer and more gentle than she had intended it to be.

'Excuse me, my dear, for intruding this way on your work. But I am an ailing old woman, and had to come the first day I could, and I have reasons for seeing you that are very urgent.'

Jean murmured some inaudible reply. She was flushed and nervous, though she tried to appear quite calm.

Mrs. Burletson looked at the girl a moment, then took her hand and drew her to a chair beside her.

'You guess what I am come about. Is not that so?'

'You mean my mother.'

'Yes.'

'I hear you think,' Jean went on, as Mrs. Burletson maintained a diplomatic silence, 'that she is sick, too sick to be left alone to care for them all here.'

Mrs. Burletson pressed the hand she held.

'My dear, what I may think is of little consequence. Tell me what you feel.'

'I spoke to mother this morning. She said nothing worth mentioning was the matter, and urged me to go away. She promised if she became very sick to let me know. I told her I could not leave home else.'

'Nothing the matter, did she say?' Mrs. Burletson answered. 'You shall see what Doctor Selliger thinks. I made him write it down for you—for your eyes alone.'

She handed the girl an open letter, and Jean read it with white shocked face.

'Cancer! I had no idea of that. It is a terrible disease.'

'The worst,' Mrs. Burletson said slowly, 'the most painful there is.'

'Is there no cure at all?'

'You see what he says—none.'

Jean looked again at the letter, and remained silent for some minutes. Mrs. Burletson narrowly watching her, and trying to read her thoughts.

'I am much obliged to you. You were very good to come to me.'

The tone in which these words were spoken was quite simple and sincere, but they bore an unmistakable meaning, and Mrs. Burletson rose to take her leave.

'It is a sore trial, Jean.'

'If only I had been better to her in the past,' the girl said bitterly; 'she has worked and suffered alone, while I, who might have shared her burdens, have never done my duty once—not once. I can see it now, when it is too late. I should have seen it long ago.'

Jean's voice was dry and hard, and though Mrs. Burletson's heart leapt up in hope at the girl's self-accusing words, there was something repellent in her manner that puzzled the old lady.

'Nothing is ever too late,' she said softly. 'It will be months —maybe a year or more—before the end comes, Jean. That is a long time.'

'You call it long? After all these years I have lived for myself, it seems just nothing. And now, when I have the will, I

find I have not the power. I cannot nurse, I cannot cook, I cannot sew to amount to anything. She has done it, killing herself for all of us. She will do it now to the end, in spite of any one. But,' recollecting herself, 'I am keeping you standing. Good-bye.'

Mrs. Burletson did not move.

'Tell me, first, child, what you are going to do.'

There was a ring of the old imperiousness in these words; Jean did not notice it, however. Her face was full of pain and distress.

'I? Why hunt everywhere I know for a woman who can do for mother what I cannot do—win her confidence; some one she will trust. It must be a very good woman, so good that she may be hard to find, but I must find her some way.'

She made a movement towards the door, but Mrs. Burletson did not see it.

'Jean, I cannot heft the meaning of your words. Do you mean that your mother will not have you—prefers a stranger?'

'Just that. Oh, she is right. Lying awake last night, I saw it all. I deserve nothing less, terribly bitter as it is.'

'Tell me what she said—every word.'

'It was not much. I had thought, before I knew how bad she was—how I could be so blind I cannot think—of going away to be a nurse at the war. I told her and father at supper yesterday. Father got angry—real mad—and said things that made me obstinate. Father and I have not understood one another lately.'

She sighed and went on.

'Then mother spoke as I have never heard her speak before to father. She said I was fitted for that, and go I should, if I rested and got strong first; and that he need not mention the expense of training, as she would pay it. This startled him, and he said no more. But before I went to bed, I told mother that she looked sick, and that I would not leave her. At this she seemed to get more mad with me than she was with father. First she said what I told you, that she did not feel really very ill; then she said if it were so, and she has to be laid right up, she would rather have any one to mind the children and nurse her than me. I told her I would learn it all, but she would not listen, and, finally, said she was convinced it was not in me. She could never trust me, she declared, no matter what my intentions might be. "Go to the war," she said, "an' nurse

soldiers. If you stayed at home and had me and the house on your mind, you'd be like some caged bird." I tried to show her it should not be so, but she would not see it. There—you have it all.'

Mrs. Burletson took both Jean's hands in hers and beamed at her.

'My dear, I thank you for this confidence. It is very precious to me. Tell me, now, what you feel yourself. You have given me your mother's words—God help her—now give me your own.'

Jean tried to release her hands.

'I cannot,' she said brusquely. 'Why should you trouble about me at all, I cannot think. It is mother who interests you. Oh, I know well what you think of me.'

'Do you? I guess you do not. But that is not the question. I ask you, for your mother's sake, to tell me now what you wish to happen to yourself? Do you feel content to go to the war after getting her a help? That is the question I will have answered before I go.'

Jean shook her head, and again tried to draw her hands away; but Mrs. Burletson held them fast.

'Jean, child, whom I loved once—whom I love *now*—tell me your thoughts for your own sake.'

'I feel,'—Jean's voice was hardly more than a whisper, and she spoke with white lips—'I feel if mother would have me now she would never regret it. I should have loved nursing the boys, but that is nothing to me compared to being with mother. I want to be the daughter she deserves to have. But it is too late. I have been tried; she has found me wanting, and it breaks my heart—it breaks my heart.'

Tears came now and choked her. Then she controlled herself and wiped her eyes.

'I am sorry to give way so; why did you let me? You must have wanted to go long since.'

'Child,' the old lady said, kissing the tear-stained face, 'I am going right now to see your mother. Wait here. Do not stir one step until she comes to you.'

CHAPTER XII.

'YOU have come to tell me about your plans? I expected you before.' Mrs. Haniman spoke with a formality of manner she had never shown towards Jean.

'I would have called in the afternoon, but this morning I was interrupted, and I had to make up time. You know, I am sure you know, I would not keep away from you.'

'This morning,' said Mrs. Haniman, considering—'this morning I saw Mrs. Burletson in town. Was that to see you?'

'Yes. Was it not good of her?' and Jean's face brightened in a way Mrs. Haniman could not fail to see.

'What had she to tell you?' The words came quickly, as though Mrs. Haniman were a little out of breath.

'A great deal,' Jean said; 'more—far more than I had any idea of. Afterwards mother and I talked everything through. Mrs. Haniman, I am not going to the war.'

'Have you—quite made up your mind?'

Jean looked a little foolish.

'You think me weak and changeable. I do not wonder. But I am sure I have decided rightly now. I am very sorry to disappoint your plans.'

Mrs. Haniman was silent for a moment.

'Now it is coming,' Jean thought, and braced herself for a storm.

'Your mother, then, is very sick?' Mrs. Haniman said.

'She can never be better,' Jean answered, with a break in her voice, though she tried to keep it steady.

Mrs. Haniman cleared her throat.

'Martha—your mother—has been good to you, Jean—the best of mothers.'

'The very best.'

'She is a true Christian; yet some have said her mind was narrow, her ideas poor and few. I do not think'—again Mrs. Haniman cleared her throat—'I say I do not think that any one will ever speak that way again.'

'Not in my hearing,' Jean exclaimed.

'Neither in mine. There are some of us who might learn more from your mother than they know themselves. But you wish to go. Well, it is my opinion, now, that you are just right. The Sanitary will miss you most of all. But you do well. Tell

your mother, my dear, with my love, that I said that, will you? She might like to know.'

The news of Mrs. Selby's illness, and of Jean's resignation of her official duties, was a great shock to Chippewa. 'Mother' Selby had been looked upon as one to whom sickness was unknown, and for Jean to take to domestic work was a nine days' wonder. Every one, however, was full of sympathy, and had Mrs. Selby accepted all the offers of help she received, Jean, so far as the work of the house went, might have sat in idleness all day long. So many of the poor women Mrs. Selby had befriended wished to do something. One offered to scrub the floor, another to 'bath the little ones Saturdays,' a third to do the mending. As Mrs. Selby said, with tears in her eyes, 'You never know how good folk really are until your hard times come.'

Times were hard for all in Chippewa. The year of 1861 had worn to its close; the summer of 1862 had come, and there was no peace nor likelihood of it. The grim war-clouds which gathered over the land were deeper and more threatening than ever, and men went to their store or field with faces which grew more anxious day by day. Not only had nearly every family a father, husband, or brother at the war who were dropping fast from wounds and disease, but a large proportion of these soldiers before they volunteered had been breadwinners for others, and to the anxiety for their safety was added the pinch of distress at home. This was balanced, to a certain extent, by the increased value of labour, and many a strong, brave-hearted woman went into workshop or factory, and not only succeeded in keeping the wolf from the door, but sent out stores of comforts to 'the boys.' Mrs. Haniman could tell of numbers of instances where poor widows, with little mouths of their own to feed, brought offerings of comforters and stockings, made with their own hands after the work of the day was over. But all women were not strong; and there were the sick and aged. These helpless ones suffered terribly in such a time as this, when the resources of all charitable people, rich as well as poor, were strained by the constant calls upon them to send help to the army. In Chippewa, after the fact became known, a systematic effort was made by a small body of citizens to provide a fund to meet this need. The money was subscribed privately, and disbursed by members of a small committee composed of some of the principal donors. Here the maintenance of a fatherless child was

provided at an orphan school, or a home found for it in a neighbour's family; there a widow was taught a trade, and her family supported until she could earn a living for herself; or an allowance was given to an old couple until their sons now at the Rappahannock could do their duty by their parents; while nourishment and medical comforts were given to the sick whose friends and relatives were unable to do more than find them a home. The committee who undertook this work was composed exclusively of men. John, who was its founder, had made this a *sine qua non.* The object he had in view was to avoid publicity and fuss, and he politely but firmly refused all co-operation from the Chippewa ladies. As the meetings of the committee were held at his farm in the presence of his mother, a woman's experience and knowledge were always at its disposal, and a nurse was employed for sick cases; but the work of the society was done by men. David Haniman, the minister, was a member; Doctor Selliger was chairman; the county attorney gave more time than he could well spare; but the main support of the whole was John himself. He did more work, and gave more money than all the rest; only his mother knew how much. It was a great help and comfort to him. During those hard years up to '64, when circumstances drew him by force from his quiet life and swept away all his resolutions; during those years he was wrestling fiercely with himself, his back against the wall. Jean was not the main cause of this, though had she never turned against him the battle would not have been so bitter. The real trial was to see the task of the Union Army growing harder month by month; to hear the cry for men—more men; yet to be obliged himself to stand on one side, a passive spectator, when he would have given his heart's blood to be in the midst of it. But he never wavered in his resolution. The need his mother felt for his presence was too obvious. She had told the simple truth, and John knew it, when she said that if he had gone to the war she would not have lived a month. This knowledge, and his own humility about himself, kept John still and outwardly quiet. He flattered himself that his mother never knew the storm that raged beneath the coolness of his manner, when they discussed the movements of the troops, and marked out, on maps he was always buying, the position of the armies, the advance and retreat of the Union Generals McClellan, Pope, Burnside, and Hooker, foiled and discomfited again and again by the Southerners, Lee and Stonewall Jackson. As the months

passed on, and the summer of '62 began to turn to autumn, in John's heart, as in those of all Union men, a sore and angry feeling grew that this condition of things must end. The Union army was far better equipped than the Confederates, and had the larger numbers. The soldiers by this time were brave, hardy, and well-trained. Yet still the rebels held their own, and more, while taxes rose and rose, and there were riots in the cities at the number of men drafted to the front.

The course of events, for the first two years of the war, went dead against the Union cause. In the autumn of 1862, after eighteen months of effort, during which millions of dollars, and thousands of good lives had been lost, the North found itself seriously impoverished, and no nearer victory than when it began—apparently not so near. By this time the first enthusiasm to preserve the Union at all costs was dying away. The fierce, positive vitality of the South had not been met, so far, with as determined an attitude in the North. This was at the bottom of more Northern defeats than the superiority of Southern generalship. If a feeling in the North answering to the desperate earnestness of the South did not arise—the South would win. Intelligent and thoughtful men in all parts of the Union saw this, and a feeling of despair—a hankering for peace at any price—began to grow like weeds in spring weather. This was not cowardice. Behind the wish for peace and the cry that went forth from certain organs of the press, 'Is it worth while to spend all our blood and treasure to preserve the Union of the States?' there were hearts strong enough to bear with courage and patience worse evils than had yet befallen the land; hearts as brave and steadfast as any in the proudest homes of Virginia and Tennessee. The army was in a far better condition than at first. The men were soldiers now. No one could accuse them of being 'civilians in uniform.' But there were two things needed to bring victory for the North. One was a battle-cry, greater and more heart-stirring even than 'the Union!' the other, leaders — men who were not only courageous and skilful. Hooker was a brave man, McClellan a clever one; both were animated with indomitable determination and inflexible perseverance, men who never knew when they were beaten, and who, when they gained an advantage, would follow it up without hesitation to the bitter end.

It was September, the month of Indian summer, and in the Northern States the peace and beauty of the country

contrasted sadly with the miseries and restlessness of man. A rumour had gone forth, no one knew why or whence, spreading with great swiftness to the remotest corners of the States, that a momentous change of policy was under consideration. At first it was said that Lincoln wished to declare peace; but this report was soon discredited and superseded by another, said to come from the highest sources, that though a peace-party was in the Cabinet itself, and growing stronger every day, Lincoln himself, like some great cone of granite beaten by an angry sea, stood sternly in the way.

In Chippewa the excitement and suspense was intense. Men and women who had not spoken to each other for years, stopped in the street to talk and ask for news. Thus one evening when John rode into town, as he did now every day, and met Jean and Mrs. Haniman, it gave him no shock to see Jean come forward.

'I am so glad to see you. There is news at last, and father is going to read it aloud. The store is crowding up already. Come with us to the platform.'

The place was full, but John quickly made way for his companions until, as on that Saturday evening long ago, he stood behind Luke Selby, side by side with Jean.

Luke was waiting for silence, and, man of easy self-possession as he was, his face was pale to-day. The store was full; not to-day, with young men crying for war. In their place were women and men with careworn faces, many in deepest mourning, all with hearts aching for boys whom they might never see again.

'My dear friends,' Luke began, and at his words every one fell silent, and the room was still, 'I have been asked by our pastor, to read out to you what the newspapers have brought this afternoon. Brother Haniman,' he turned to the white-haired minister who stood behind him, 'has it in his mind that we should give public expression of our feelings on this matter. Friends, I hold here a message from the President. He has thrown the gauntlet down, and if you, the people of the North, confirm his words, there will be no peace until the South is crushed. I will read you what he says.'

He stepped forward to the edge of the platform, and read in a deep solemn tone so that every word was heard by all, the proclamation for the emancipation of the slaves.

'That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one

thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within every state, or part of a state, the people whereof shall be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and for ever free. And the executive Government of the United States, including the military and civil authorities, thereof will recognise and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any effort they may make for their actual freedom.—Abraham Lincoln.'

When the sonorous voice ceased, there was a deep silence. The paleness of Luke's face had fallen on his listener's as it was falling on the faces of all the hundreds of thousands throughout the Union who read the news this day. No one in Wisconsin failed to grasp the full significance of the proclamation. It meant that from 'now, thenceforward, and for ever' the North would fight not for the Union alone; not for the Union chiefly; but for the freedom of the slaves. Up to this time, both at home and abroad, a thousand different opinions were held concerning the amount of interest Northern men really felt in the bondage of the negro—the emancipation of whom the Southerners believed, and rightly, that Abraham Lincoln himself desired more than anything else. There were the Abolitionists, of course. But even when the war broke out they were not a tithe of the population. The great majority in the North had been welded together to fight the South through their devotion to the flag. Numbers approved of slavery; none, except the Abolitionists, were prepared to vote—much less to fight—for the freedom of the negro. When Lincoln's emancipation proclamation was discussed by the Cabinet, many earnest men told him it would prove a fatal blow to the Union. It meant war on the part of the South, more vindictive and stubborn than had been yet, for Southerners were certain to believe that the proclamation was only intended to provoke an insurrection of the slaves, which proved to be the case. What a terrible blow, argued the peace-party, would this be to the North, a nation tired of war. All of these objections, however, Lincoln put on one side, and against opposition that was not dreamed of by the public, and will, perhaps, never be known, he sent forth his message to the people, played his great trump-card, then waited with a quiet, even mind to hear the answer.

The silence in the store at Chippewa lasted a full minute;

and then a man stepped forward on the platform, David Haniman, the minister, and all the people stared.

'Martha Haniman's husband' they called him, tolerating him in his ministerial capacity as one 'gifted with learnin',' looking down upon him from an immeasurable height of superiority for his simplicity. He had never led the smallest of their boys except by the persuasion of his mildness and sweet nature. Many of the younger men thought he was 'not all there.' Now they did not know him. His bowed head was thrown back royally, his feet were firmly planted, his eyes a-blaze.

'God bless the President!' he cried, and his voice ringing through the hall like a trumpet note. 'God bless Abraham Lincoln! My brothers and sisters, let us give thanks unto the Lord. You, who have sons in Virginia; you, whose fathers, brothers, husbands fight under Grant in Tennessee; and you, who, like myself, have been denied the privilege of sending their dearest to this sacred war,—give thanks to God. There is no power on earth can defeat our soldiers now. Up to this time, while we have fought for the Union only, the Southerners have had a cause many have thought near as good as ours. Now, we fight for freedom, they for slavery, and this will bring their power to naught. Brothers and sisters, in this hour of trial —for the flames of war will light the sky when our true men march on—let us, I beseech you, stand by the President. I am a man of peace, but it is my duty first to preach the Christian religion. Slavery is anti-christian. Those who defend this monstrous thing must be swept down with the sword until they see the evil of their ways or cumber the earth no more. Support this proclamation—ask brother Selby to send a telegraphic message to the President, to tell him that we, citizens of Chippewa assembled, hereby accord him our most heartfelt thanks for his great words, and will uphold them and all that they may bring to the last drop of our blood.'

He paused, and sank back into his chair, collapsing, now that it was over, into the mild pastor that they knew.

But his words received a response no one else's would have done. John seconded the resolution, and then it was carried by acclamation without one dissentient voice.

The war cry had been given to the North in its hour of sorest need. Here and there savage protests might be heard, while, in the South, it was received with a universal shriek of denunciation. But Lincoln was right. From city, and town, and hamlet,

especially from the West, came a mighty cry of relief and congratulation. War? Who now could dream of peace until the serpent—slavery—which had spread the venom of its noisome breath so many weary years, lay crushed and lifeless, ground beneath the heel of a free people, determined, stern, united in one bond from East to West, unconquerable as fate?

(*To be continued.*)

WOMEN'S PUBLIC WORK.

IV.—SCHOOL BOARDS AND PARISH COUNCILS.

To give an outline of the work done in our Board Schools is to demonstrate sufficiently forcibly, how far their management is a peculiarly appropriate task for women to undertake, even were it not possible to point to much that they have already effected. Those who have reached middle life can look back on the educational world of the poor, before the Education Act passed in 1870, and can judge of the changes which it has wrought. Twenty-eight years ago, hundreds and thousands of poor children never entered school doors, or only did so during a few years of early childhood. Little things of seven or eight were hurried off to field-labour or street-selling. All round you were boys and girls, men and women, who could neither read nor write. Here and there a kind mistress took in hand the education of the young groom, the under gardener, and the kitchen maid; or attendants at a night-school slowly and laboriously spelt syllables and formed pothooks. In the great towns the forlorn and outcast were gathered into ragged schools by those men and women who made such a noble stand against darkness and ignorance. We can recollect the dame schools,* kept by old women in the cottage kitchens of many a village, where were taught the three R's—some needlework, and a deferential bow and courtesy to 'the gentry' when they looked in to listen to the dull, monotonous reading in broad dialect, and to review the copy books and neat seams. It would be unfair to deny that many excellently managed schools existed, in which a sound and careful education was given; but even in these there was little opportunity for anything beyond elementary learning, the standard would now be regarded as a very low one, and attendance was not compulsory. Besides

* Those who have managed National Schools under Government inspection between 1840 and 1870 will put this picture, as the rule, many years further back.—EDITORS.

this, the accommodation was entirely inadequate. When the Board was established, in 1871, only 261,158 places were available to take in 574,693 children in London alone. Many of the buildings in use were terribly insanitary, the appliances were insufficient and obsolete, and though some teachers were excellent, many more were quite unfit for the position they occupied. Those schools which stood out like shining lights, fostered by the parish priest, or the not less earnest nonconformist minister, officered by competent men and women, and visited by persons full of enthusiasm in the cause of the children, yet rested on an insecure footing. Death or change might remove their warmest supporters, and, from indifference or necessity, the work might drift to ruin, or fall below the standard of efficiency, which there was no legal obligation to uphold.

The Education Act, by imposing an obligatory standard of attainment, and by insisting on certain conditions of buildings and officials, has levelled up schools all round. Our Board Schools are now the greatest educational organization under any elective authority in the world, and, if still far from perfection, are always striving after improvement. Last year in London the total school population was 826,371, and, though the great voluntary agencies own more than half of the thousand schools of London, the Board Schools have some 500,000 children on its registers. The sites upon which the schools stand have cost £3,000,000 sterling, and the buildings twice as much. The annual expenditure of the Board now nears £3,000,000; more than £1,000,000 going in salaries to teachers; £90,000 a year goes in repairs and renovations in buildings. The books, stationery, apparatus, tools, and utensils sent every year to the schools, weighs 2000 tons, and this in London alone. In the provinces the system is adapted to the needs and capabilities of the local population. If educational opportunities are lacking in any part of the country, notice is given to the local authorities, and if, after six months, no voluntary efforts are made to supply the want, the Educational Department may raise a rate and institute a Board School. Every parish, *i.e.* place for which a separate rate is made, may have a School Board formed to supply its deficiencies. The Board of Management must not number less than five or more than fifteen, except in London, where power is vested in fifty-five persons. The number is determined by the population of each place, and most of the large boroughs have from twelve to

fifteen members. All the Boards meet every Thursday. The whole of a Board must be re-elected every three years; but, as new Boards are formed all through the year, and there is no uniform date for re-election (as in the case of Boards of Guardians, for example), the exact returns are more difficult to obtain.

Besides an elementary education, which is compulsory even for those children whose parents are anxious to remove them as early as possible, the Board provides opportunity for advanced education and instruction in various domestic arts, besides managing evening continuation classes for those who have left the day schools. One by one, fresh subjects have been added to the curriculum; needlework, cookery, housewifery, science lectures, mechanics, wood and metal work, chemical laboratory. All these subjects are not taught in every school, but they can be provided if suited to the capacities of the children of any particular district. Besides schools for the normal, the Board has established special instruction for the blind, deaf and dumb, physically and mentally deficient, truants, and unmanageable children, and special schools for teachers. A delightful book, lately published by Charles Morley, 'Work in Board Schools,' gives us a very picturesque impression of the work of these different departments. He describes the little four-roomed house, where housewifery is taught, and where the little scholars dust, sweep, and lay table; the kitchens, where such excellent plain dishes are made, that we are not surprised to hear that the cooking classes are high in favour with the pupils' mothers. The Hugh Myddleton School, in Clerkenwell, which holds 4000 children, won a high compliment on this score from the inspectress, who said she had seen and judged cooking exhibitions for ten years in England and on the Continent, but had never met with so many really good homely dishes as those prepared by these children. Laundry work is taught with the ordinary appliances of a working-man's home, and girls are encouraged to bring garments from home, so as to show their mother their progress. Besides being shown how to lay dinner, the importance of regular meals and proper behaviour at table is inculcated. Personal cleanliness and home tidiness are instilled, care of health, and the value of recreation. In fact, looking over the scheme of some of the large London schools, one is inclined to think those who profit by it are entitled to exclaim, 'What I know not, is not knowledge.' It is no part of my intention to go into the vexed question of religious teaching, further than to

state that the Board enjoins a very thorough instruction in Bible history, with the Lord's Prayer, the Sermon on the Mount, and the Ten Commandments. These, with the Twenty-third Psalm, are common to nearly all the standards. In the higher standards may be mentioned the Fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and the Fourteenth of St. John. The majority of the teachers are Church people, and the lessons are as a rule most sympathetically expounded. A succession of writers have borne witness to the revolution that the Education Act of the last twenty-seven years has worked. In many parts of London, which used to swarm with mobs of vagrant thievish children, little wild street-arabs, going as straight as they could go to the prison and the workhouse, are now to be found orderly regiments, drilling to the music of those pianos over which so many battles were fought, learning wood-carving, carpentering, and mechanics, under practical foremen. In some of the poorest quarters, holding exhibitions of their productions for the benefit of proud parents.

It is satisfactory to feel that women have not been behindhand in working for these results, although it is a matter for some surprise that not more have come forward for election. On the London School Board elected 1879, there were nine ladies. In 1895 there were only four, the moderates being in the ascendant, and, with one exception, all the lady members being progressives. On the present Board, however, there are eight ladies, and in the provinces the last returns showed 109. Three ladies upon this Board have already distinguished themselves upon the last, and another, Miss Davenport-Hill, who has just retired, was one of those elected in 1879, and has sat ever since. Before that she had been for twenty years manager of a large ragged school in Bristol. Miss Davenport-Hill has given much attention to the Board's Industrial Schools, where unmanageable children and those with criminal or vagrant tendencies are sent. She is said to be personally known to every boy in the great schools at Brentwood. To her is largely due the establishment of as many as 140 centres for cooking instruction and 50 for teaching laundry work. The first experiment of fitting up a cottage like a working man's house was made under her auspices at Hammersmith, and has been a brilliant success. Miss Eve, who was selected for Islington in 1891, was seven years on the staff of a Girls' High School at Croydon, then for many years a member of a Marylebone Committee of

Managers. Mrs. Homan's interest was first aroused by presiding over a girl teachers' club at the East End. She became the manager of a school in Chelsea, and here she observed what sort of knowledge would best qualify her to be useful on the School Board. She went through the South Kensington School of Cookery, including the scullery department, then became a probationer for four months at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and attended a course of medical lectures. She also took a share in the administration of the Children's Holiday Fund, and when elected in 1891, had acquired an insight into various branches of work, and a personal knowledge of the class of children to be worked for. Mrs. Maitland, another prominent member, has interested herself in the works department, the study of sites and plans, seeing to repairs and interior alterations, and the warmth and cleaning of the schools.

In consideration of the excellence of Miss Eve's work in the industrial schools, she was last year appointed by the Home Office to make an inquiry into the whole system of their management. She has made drawing and needlework her special care, and has organised nine exhibitions of the pupils' work in the nine finishing schools of which she has charge. Every member of the London School Board takes charge of a certain number of schools in his or her district. Thus one lady undertakes nine, another a dozen out of 54 in Tower Hamlets, a third nine out of 46 in Kilburn and Shepherd's Bush.

A zealous member of the School Board gives it practically his or her whole time. Three days at least are spent at the Board's offices on the Embankment, attending committees or the general meeting on Thursdays in the great round room, which looks rather like a miniature House of Commons. Other days are employed in visiting the schools in charge, and there is an enormous mass of correspondence with managers, teachers, and officers of the Board to attend to. One member spent her Christmas holiday one winter, visiting industrial schools in different parts of the country where London girls are placed by the Metropolitan Board, and another has made a special inquiry on the Continent into the German and Austrian methods of dealing with deaf and dumb children, and has studied the needs of the mentally deficient. There are an enormous number of committees and sub-committees, and the lady members have attended from 202 to 273 each in the course of the year.

Women naturally understand the wants of children better

than men can do, and it is not book-learning alone that is needed. A woman is able to confer on an easier footing with the parent and the woman teacher, and notices a hundred small details which, though they are essential to the success of a scheme, appear insignificant to busy men, and are apt to be thrust aside as unnecessary. The present eight women members have planned out a campaign of hard work, and one or other of them are on most of the important committees; in fact, there is only one, the Finance Committee, on which the women members of the Board are not represented.

Among those who have done splendid work on provincial boards may be noted the late Miss Lydia Becker, who for twenty years worked on the Manchester Board, and Miss Emily Sturge, for seventeen years a member of the School Board at Bristol. Both these ladies made a point of securing for girls equal privileges to those enjoyed by boys, and were only removed by death from their sphere of usefulness.

Any person of full age, male or female, may be nominated by two burgesses or ratepayers, ten clear days before election, to serve on the School Board. The work of the London Board or those of our great cities is heavy and important; not less important, but more within the capacities of an average woman, is the management of the smaller schools established in so many country parishes.

Where two-thirds of the teachers and more than half the pupils are girls, it should not need much argument to convince the electors that it is advisable for women to sit upon the Boards. One of the great points in their favour is the way they are able to make in the confidence of the female teachers, whose interest as a body in their little pupils is of the first importance. The friendly intercourse of the woman member with the woman teacher gives opportunities for discussion of various matters affecting the health, happiness, and improvement of the children, which for obvious reasons can be much more freely utilised than by a male member.

Many people in the educational world are anxious to encourage ladies to take up elementary school teaching, and should they respond to the suggestion the co-operation of other ladies on the Board may be even more productive of good results than it is at present.

The Parish Councils, after the first short spell of attention and curiosity with which they were greeted, have gone their way

so quietly, not to say prosaically, that some of us may learn with surprise that more than a hundred women are serving upon them in various parts of the country. Busybodies, and those who joined to assert their importance, have gradually seceded before the necessity for steady work, and power is falling more and more into the hands of persevering workers and persons whose character gradually wins the confidence of those neighbours who are too busy or too careless to give practical help in local affairs. We heard a great deal at one time of the blow which the power of the Parish Councils was to give to the influence of the squire or the rector, but in many rural districts it is curious to find these gentlemen lamenting the apathy shown by their parishioners, and the tendency to let all the business drift into their hands. Still, there are plenty of cases in which the post of parish councillor has given real power to the humblest parishioner to press for important improvements. Every woman who takes a real interest in the village in which she lives ought to rejoice that the Local Government Act of 1894 has given an opportunity to women as well as men to exert their influence in the 'Village Parliament,' and there should be at least one woman on every Parish Council.

The functions of the Council are various. They include the purchase and hire of land for allotments, the appointment of overseers and assistant overseers, whose duty it is to collect the poor rates, levy the rate required for education, put every person qualified to vote on the proper register, and in cases of emergency to give relief to the poor. (A woman can be an overseer.) They have the entire or partial control of parish charities, within certain limitations; they can obtain, by agreement, a proper water supply for the villages and cottages round; can procure the erection of a village hall, protect village greens, rights of way and roadside grazing, and repair footpaths leading across fields or away from public roads. All who are acquainted with village life can easily grasp what this means. The matter of allotments is of the greatest consequence to the poor. The corn and potatoes, the pig, mean food for summer and winter. More than one woman has fought on this matter in her Council. One lady, who was elected chairman in a village where she had worked for many years, says it is the first matter she and her colleagues tackled. They exhausted every means in their power to procure the necessary land, and were just deciding to apply for compulsory powers when two pieces were offered to

them. These were accepted, and have been of the greatest advantage to the village. In a neighbouring village a woman deeply interested in its life was returned to the Council. The water supply here was so bad and insufficient that the children were continually suffering from skin eruption. Almost alone and unaided, after two years' determined work, she managed to get a proper supply. Long after the new well was sunk the villagers flocked out of their cottages to show to all comers the boon which was a source of health to themselves and their children.

The muddy tracks across meadows or along deep lanes, often no better than quagmires in a wet winter, are hard on little children, with a mile's walk or more to reach the school. These tracks, as mothers know well, have to answer for colds and bad illnesses, and for many a pair of worn-out boots. A lady, who was lately Chairman for the Sherfield-on-Loddon Council, has given a graphic account of how her council took the footpaths in hand; how, one by one, each landowner was approached; how rights of way were re-established and marked on an ordnance map, red for bridle-ways, green for footpaths; how the map was placed in the parish chest, and copies of it framed and hung in public-houses lying at either extremity of the parish; and tells how the bit of work finally pleased all parties, as it defended the landowners against any new tracks over their land being claimed in the future. The same lady advocates the making of tracks for wheeled vehicles to isolated cottages, and points out that many a poor body's home is, in the winter time, almost inaccessible to tradesman and doctor in our country parishes.

Some women councillors have been appointed as trustees to parochial charities. Many charities have been unearthed since the passing of the Act of 1894. Those which had become diverted have been restored to their original object, or where sometimes the object had disappeared with time, wise administration has been arranged, and the production of accounts insisted on, where for long none had been kept. In the larger villages the Councils, through the Parish Meeting, may put in force the Adoption Acts, which include Baths and Wash-houses Acts, Public Libraries Act, and other improvements.

Every squire's and clergyman's wife or daughter, who has the real good of the parish at heart, every energetic woman amongst the farmers and tradesmen class, every upright, sensible

working woman who has time to give, should consider what powers she might usefully exercise if elected to the Parish Council. Women have much appreciation of detail, and far from being lavish with the ratepayer's money they have a great sense of the importance of small sums, while at the same time they can estimate the value of improvements which touch the home most nearly, even better than a man can do.

Elections are held every year at the Parish Meeting, so that there is the possibility of constant change of councillors, and an opportunity for fresh learners to come in, thus extending the area of interest and of civic education. In order to stand for election, a woman must fulfil one or other of two conditions: either her name must be on the list of parochial electors, or she must have resided within the parish for a full year. I cannot do better than quote here the words of that energetic chairman to whom I have already referred. 'It has been objected that Parish Council business has no opening for definitely feminine work. Well, I grant that there is none that a woman can do *better* than a man, as there is in workhouse management and School Boards; but for all that, I must strongly urge all women who have the good of their fellows at heart not to shrink from standing for their Parish Councils. Beyond the softening effect which I have found so valuable, women are so much more in earnest about small things than men, and Parish Council work deals with matters of seemingly small import. A polluted well, an overcrowded cottage, a barrier across a footpath, are too trivial for men to make a stir about, and perhaps offend the wage-giver into the bargain; but an independent woman, knowing that "trifles make the sum of human things," and that these trifles, if looked into, will reveal further defects to remedy, will be anxious for frequent meetings; her cry will ever be, never be content to stand still till all the good you have the power to do for the poor of your parish be an accomplished fact.'

The London Vestries and District Boards correspond in some degree to the rural Parish Councils. They are the sanitary authorities for their respective areas, and superintend the lighting, cleaning, and paving of the streets. They control common lodging-houses, and can suppress disorderly houses. They manage the public libraries, the cemeteries, and the baths and washhouses. They can acquire and manage open spaces. They have the appointment, among others, of the sanitary

inspectors, and each London Vestry deals with an area having a population as great as that of a large provincial town. If good work is to be done for the well-being of the poor by sitting on Council Boards in country parishes, not less valuable is the opportunity afforded in our great metropolis. In each area there is a wilderness of homes to be affected by the conduct of the vestries, 'miles and miles of streets—mostly mean.' The struggle to keep the home of the poor clean and healthy in London is in any case a desperate one, and yet its success is of vital importance to family life and character. The importance of keeping surroundings decent, of suppressing moral or physical nuisances, of providing such recreation as baths and playgrounds and books afford, can hardly be overrated. Women are needed upon the London Vestries because the arrangements for women in public baths require the supervision of women; because they will understand how to make the public wash-houses of practical use to the poor inhabitants of one or two rooms, who are thereby saved from all the miseries of 'washing-day' in confined space and with insufficient appliances, and because the distribution of the parochial charities, which include such matters as the apprenticing of the daughters of poor parishioners and the distribution of coals and blankets, are in their hands. The ignorance and loneliness of the poor in our great London parishes is more against them even than actual poverty, and the amount of misery which a faithful member on a Vestry Board can obviate is surprising. If the Vestry woman can keep in touch with the district visitors of the poorer parts of the parish, it will enable her to give and receive much useful information. So far only about a dozen women have addressed themselves to this branch of public work, and its opportunities are too little known; but every year more women are awaking to their duties as citizens, and every now and then one who has for long struggled on as a district visitor, sighing over the difficulties that meet her at every turn, suddenly realises that in the yearly election to the Vestry, there lies at her hand the possibility of an opening for obtaining another power to benefit the poor, and that here, too, women's gifts as well as men's should be placed at the service of the people.

EVELYN MARCH-PHILLIPPS.

OFF THE HIGH ROAD:

THE STORY OF A SUMMER.

BY ELEANOR C. PRICE, AUTHOR OF 'IN THE LION'S MOUTH,' 'YOUNG DENYS,' 'MISS LATIMER OF BRYANS,' ETC.

CHAPTER I.

AN ADVERTISEMENT.

'Ne rejetez pas ma prière!
Votre cœur vous dira pourquoi.'

'WILL any kind people, living quietly off the high road, receive a person in serious trouble, homeless and friendless?—Address: M., 50, Crossway Street, Manningham.'

Edwin Dampier held the *Manningham Post* before his eyes, and stared at this advertisement with a bewildered frown on his young brow. The mistress of the farm, who had handed him the paper and pointed out the place, went on placidly knitting.

'But I don't understand, Mrs. Downes,' said the young man. 'Do you mean to say you have answered this?'

'I've sent Jessie to answer it, Mr. Edwin; to make inquiries, that is. She was going to Manningham to-day, anyhow, to do some shopping, and Crossway Street is very convenient to get at.'

'You have sent Miss Jessie! On the faith of this advertisement? But it may be a regular swindle, you know, and it looks awfully like one. What can we know about the fellow?'

'Fellow!' Mrs. Downes repeated. Her handsome old face was faintly flushed now; she let her knitting fall, and it was her turn to be bewildered. 'Fellow! Oh, Mr. Edwin, it can't be a man, surely! It struck Jessie and me just the same—it must be some poor woman in distress—a poor widow, perhaps—and when we looked at all our own blessings and comforts, we both agreed it was our duty to see, at all events, whether we could

do anything to help. We neither of us ever thought of its being a man. Oh, it can't be, surely!'

'Why not, I should like to know! "A person" may be anything.'

'A man wouldn't advertise himself "homeless and friendless."'

'Wouldn't he though, especially if he was a scamp, and wanted to hide himself for some good reason in the depths of the country. "Off the high road"! Whatever it is, man or woman, the police are probably after it. I say, Mrs. Downes, you shouldn't do these things without telling me or the Colonel.'

'If the police were after *her*, poor thing, she wouldn't dare advertise in the *Post*,' said Mrs. Downes.

'Well, there may be something in that. But it is very queer, and I'm astonished at a sensible woman like you—still more at Miss Jessie—because you were always soft-hearted and sentimental. What will Joseph Arnold say, I wonder? She should have consulted him before going off on a wild-goose chase like this.'

'It was I who sent her, Mr. Edwin; and I don't allow Joseph Arnold to dictate to me,' said Mrs. Downes, a little stiffly. 'Besides, there was no time to consult anybody. She went by the early train; and when a person is in "serious trouble"——'

'Which is generally a person's own fault.'

'Well, I've sent her, and I must take the consequences. Jessie is a sensible girl, as you know, and I don't expect she will get us into any difficulty.'

'I hope not, I'm sure; but if she does, let me share it,' said the young man. 'Send for me if you want anybody turned out of the house. Remember we are "off the high road" with a vengeance, and that tells both ways as to security. You can't get at the police in a hurry if you want them. Old Hezekiah wouldn't be much good to you, but there are always my father and me. By-the-by, does Hezekiah know?'

'No, Mr. Edwin. You are the only person. If you had not called, nobody would have known.'

Edwin laughed.

'You are a plucky woman, Mrs. Downes. You behave as if taking in a stray advertiser was as simple as—dropping a stitch in your knitting. I say, look, I hope it won't be so disastrous!'

'Never mind, I shall soon pick it up again,' said Mrs. Downes, taking up her needles. 'Yes, sir, you're very positive, but you know no more than I do myself. We're just equal

there, only I do remember having heard of such things as "angels unawares."'

'Oh, do angels advertise in the *Manningham Post*, I wonder?' said Edwin, scornfully; and he took up the paper and looked at the advertisement again. 'No, it won't do, really,' he said; 'Miss Jessie has some sense. She'll come home and tell you it is a swindle.'

'There's something odd about it, and it may possibly be a man, in which case I couldn't undertake to have him. But I don't believe it is a swindle,' replied Mrs. Downes, busy with her stitches.

'Take my word for it. I know more of this wicked world than you do.'

'Do you, Mr. Edwin? I shouldn't have thought it.'

She lifted her eyes—they were peculiarly beautiful, large and soft, in spite of her more than sixty years—and looked smiling at the young fellow as he sat opposite to her. He was a pleasant thing to look at, for any one whose taste was not too modern and too critical. He was tall, broad-shouldered, and well made. His features were a little too marked and delicate to match with his sunburnt skin and the roughness of his clothes; his eyes and mouth were melancholy, and did not even brighten much when he smiled. It was not an æsthetic melancholy, or in any way put on to be admired, but rather suggested a man who, by his own fault or other people's, had been left stranded while other men of his age hurried on in the world's full tide, joining in all its work and play. Not that young Dampier looked discontented or disappointed; perhaps, indeed, he might have accepted his position, whatever it was, with too much resignation. If his looks were grave, they were also sweet. If it was necessary that at twenty-four, living in his father's house, a landowner and the last of an old race, his clothes should be almost threadbare at the elbows and knees, his collars frayed out, his hat more than weather-beaten, perhaps it was as well that he should bear all this with an indifference hardly natural to a handsome young man. And yet Mrs. Downes, the oldest tenant and friend of the family, always felt anger mingled with her love when she looked at him. She explained to herself that she was angry with the disgraceful servants who allowed their young master to go about such an object; but in reality she was impatient with Edwin's own carelessness.

'If neither the Colonel nor the maids have the sense to see to him, he ought to see to himself,' she often said to her daughter; and with the slightest encouragement she would have spoken severely to Edwin on the subject. But with all his easy pleasantness, he was a difficult person to scold.

Often, having nothing better to do, he would stroll down to the farm and sit as he was sitting now in the large low kitchen. The red-tiled floor was as spotless as everything else there; the tall clock ticked very loudly in the corner, and the firelight all day long, summer and winter, played with its brass face, and danced on the oak cupboard doors and every other polished bit of furniture. There were generally a cat and kittens playing about, in consequence of whom Edwin's collie had to be left at the outside door; but he was patient, having caught something of his master's philosophy. The long, clear, small-paned window looked out on a narrow stone courtyard; and beyond the wall of this, which was bright with yellow moss and stone-crop and red valerian, lay the farmyard where the cows came lowing in the afternoon. Then Hezekiah, like an old prophet, his grey beard streaming, passed slowly under the weight of his milk pails; and Jessie, if she was at home, went out to the dairy to receive them.

This afternoon it was not yet nearly milking time, but the sun was already pouring in through that window which looked to the west, and passing behind Mrs. Downes and her chair to shine full upon her visitor. He basked in the warmth without any self-consciousness, though her smile died gradually away as the too candid light betrayed his extreme shabbiness.

'How long is it since you went to London, Mr. Edwin?' she asked, after a minute's silent gaze.

'Oh, I don't know. A year or two. Is that why you think I know so little of the world? Must one be an utter fool because one is—well, contented—to live in the country? Why, what did our grandfathers do?'

'Our grandfathers belonged to a different age. No, I don't say they are fools who live in the country; that would be too hard on myself, who have never seen the great city at all. But young men—I think young men ought to see what's going on. They ought to get a notion of life as it is in the great hurrying world, Mr. Edwin. They ought to go to cricket matches, and football matches, and a lot of other sights and amusements. Even theatres—if I had a boy of my own, I shouldn't object to

his going to the theatre, for I do believe, in spite of what some people say, that some plays may be really instructive.'

'And music-halls, what about them? And races?'

'When I'm ignorant, I don't give an opinion; and I know nothing of music-halls,' said Mrs. Downes. 'As to races, you get into bad company and lose your money. I heard the Colonel say to my poor husband once, "When a young fellow takes to horse-racing, he generally goes to the devil." Well, we all know the Colonel burnt his own fingers a bit once. However, bygones are bygones. And I wasn't talking of racecourses, but of London streets. I think a young gentleman ought to know his way about there. It smartens him up. Don't you see, sir, people like me know the world from experience of human nature that comes with a long life; but people like you, if you'll excuse me, have to learn from the outside. And why should a gentleman be more ignorant than other folks? Look at Joseph Arnold, as we mentioned just now. He's chock full of information. Half an hour's talk with him is as good as reading the newspaper.'

'Even down to the advertisements?'

'Now you're laughing at me, Mr. Edwin. Arnold is an example, however. Born and bred in a country town, there's no part of England or Scotland or Wales that he has not visited, and he has formed opinions on every subject, be it trade, sport, religion, politics——'

'He is a wonderful man, Joseph Arnold. And yet you wouldn't let him dictate to you, Mrs. Downes. You know he would disapprove of this person in serious trouble just as much as I do, and so you wouldn't even wait to consult him, clever as he is.'

Edwin had a way of quietly sticking to his point, which always disconcerted Mrs. Downes a little. She felt that she had wandered away from her own; for in asking about his visits to London, she had intended to work round to the necessity for a new suit of clothes. The tailor's shop must come before the cricket match, that was quite plain.

If this moral of his old friend's discourse had occurred to Edwin himself, he showed no sign of it. He got up presently, standing in the full sunshine and calmly meeting his hostess's rather distressed eyes.

'Is Miss Jessie coming back by the four o'clock train?' he said. 'Well, I shall be curious to know what sort of a tramp

she brings with her. Have you got the spare room ready? Now, confess!'

She blushed a little, laughing.

'What business is that of yours?' she said.

'Oh, I say! And the best tea-things?'

'I declare,' said Mrs. Downes, 'if you say another word I shall send the person up to you, and you won't have the heart to turn a poor creature out into the woods.'

'Oh, don't flatter yourself. My heart is as hard as a millstone. But I'm not very anxious, you know. I put my trust in Miss Jessie.'

As Edwin said good-bye, the collie on the doorstep thumped his tail against the door. Then he stood up and pushed his nose into his master's hand, being too old and dignified for any more noisy demonstrations.

Mrs. Downes followed the young master to the door, and shaded her eyes with her hand to watch him as he crossed the garden and orchard in the sweet sunshine of that early May afternoon. Outside there a light west wind was bringing a smell of spring from the meadows, and chasing a few white clouds across the sky. The garden, which lay to the south of the courtyard, was full of wallflowers and lavender bushes; a row of old-fashioned beehives stood under the wall. The farmhouse itself, long and irregular, was partly red brick and partly washed a pleasant yellow cream colour; the doors and windows were painted brown. The orchard, south again of the garden, was now a more beautiful garden, being rosy with apple blossom, and the grass under the trees was richer and greener than any grass in all the country round. All about sang a chorus of birds; they flew down from the tall trees to pick their food after the chickens among the stones; and further off there was a cawing of rooks, where they had lived for centuries in a succession of tall fir trees in the spinney that sloped to the river.

The young squire walked away, with his dog at his heels, through this picture of spring, and the mistress of the farm watched him with her kind eyes till he was lost to sight in bowers of apple blossom. Then she looked round at her own domain, and shook her head with a little smile to herself.

'I doubt Mr. Edwin's in the right, and I may have done something foolish. But it'll be long before I own that up to him, or to anybody else either. After all, it isn't as if Jessie was a silly lass, to be taken in by any impostor.'

And yet it was with a decided sensation of discomfort that she turned back into her kitchen. That person in 'serious trouble' was beginning to weigh upon her pious and courageous mind. She felt as if this might be her last day of peaceful and untroubled possession at the Old Slang Farm.

CHAPTER II.

SQUIRES OF STEPFORD.

'Overhead the tree-tops meet,
Flowers and grass spring 'neath one's feet;
There was nought above me, nought below,
My childhood had not learned to know.'

YOUNG Edwin Dampier tramped away home to Stepford Hall, and the further he went from Mrs. Downes and her kitchen, the more troubled he became. The welfare of all the Stepford people was very near his heart, but the welfare of Mrs. Downes was nearest of all. Dear, good, charitable, angelic, silly old woman! How could she have been so left to herself as to notice such an extraordinary advertisement at all, much more answer it! Such madness was almost incredible. Why, the advertisement bore the marks of cheating on its very face. What honest person ever appealed to public sympathy in such language! 'Off the high road'—'serious trouble'—'homeless and friendless'—but beyond everything, 'off the high road.' What could that mean but a wish to hide from something or somebody—probably, of course, from justice—for what other motive could there be in these days of civilisation and safety? People were not persecuted now—forced to hide from their enemies, or even from their friends.

Below Mrs. Downes's orchard there was an old road in the hollow, a private road belonging to the Stepford estate, now never used except as a footpath, or for farm and estate purposes. It led along a field that ran down from the farm to other fields near the river, a field which was very long and narrow, and had been known since Domesday Book, in Midland language, as the Slang; from this the farm, which was really the home farm of Stepford Hall, took its name. From the Slang, divided by a gate and stile, the road ran on along the upper edge of the rookery, and then passed under the garden walls of the Hall itself, which stood high above the river.

All was very lonely, very still; for Stepford village, small and quite agricultural, lay a mile and a half further on across the fields. And the nearest high road was two miles off in the other direction, to the north, where a bridge crossed the river; two miles beyond again was the small market town. In this direction, therefore, lay Stepford's way into the world; and now and then young Dampier might be seen sitting on that stile, which the nearest fir trees shaded, looking quietly out to blue hills across the river, on the north-west horizon, beyond which faint dark trails of smoke sometimes crossed the sky. For this depth of rural England was not a hundred miles from the Black Country.

The young man had known what it was to be impatient of the fate that kept him through his best years here among the quiet woods and meadows. He had felt 'the need of a world of men' to an extent which would have startled Mrs. Downes, who thought she knew him so well; but in the last year or two he had settled down fairly well to the life that seemed cut out for him. He had, indeed, taken root deep enough to be disturbed on his own account, as well as on hers, by Mrs. Downes's romantic absurdity. The possibility of some exciting or amusing adventure to break in on the dead level of Stepford would have been welcome to most young people; to him it suggested 'endless bother.' That afternoon he sat on the stile for a short time, meditating whether he ought to go back towards five o'clock, on the chance of being wanted to protect Mrs. Downes against the consequences of her folly. At last he decided that this was hardly necessary, and reminded himself that Jessie Downes had some common sense.

'She'll hear of it from that fellow Arnold, if she gets her mother into a scrape,' he reflected. 'What a lot Mrs. Downes thinks of him; but I don't believe she likes him in her heart any more than I do. I think he's a brute, Don—what do you say?'

Don, who was lying at his master's feet under the stile, lifted his head with a low growl. At the same moment Edwin was aware of somebody coming up behind him along the soft grassy road. He swung himself over the stile, and faced the very man on whom he had just asked his dog's opinion.

'Down—down!' he said to the collie, who slunk behind him with a sulky air, and then watched the two men shaking hands with a disgust which could hardly have been unnoticed by the least self-conscious victim of it.

Mr. Arnold, indeed, looked the last man in the world to trouble himself about the likings or dislikings of a dog, so long as they did not take an active form. Nor was he likely, at first sight, to be at all affected by the fancies of his fellow-men. He was at least ten years older than Edwin Dampier, taller, bigger, and altogether more personable, with dark keen eyes, a reddish skin, and a heavy black moustache. He was well-dressed and smartly set up, with an air more of the town than the country. He was one of the principal men in the neighbouring little town, a miller with a good business and a large connection, a rising man in that part of the Midlands. His manner was pleasant enough, though superior; it was easy to see that he thought himself a much better man all round than this shabby youth he met in the lane.

'Well, Mr. Dampier, enjoying the view? It's a nice property, this of yours, if the approaches were not so abominable.'

'Ah—yes, they are bad,' said Edwin, very coolly.

'And I was saying to myself just now, what a pity Colonel Dampier doesn't cut down some of those trees in front of the house. I was crossing the park ten minutes ago, coming from Stepford, and when I came to the corner by the brook, where there used to be such a pretty view of the house—why, it was gone. Overgrown and smothered up. It wants a regular clearing out, you know. And all the doctors tell you it's not healthy to have trees so near a house. Haven't you noticed it yourself? The view from the south windows must be spoilt, I should think.'

'My father likes his trees better than the view,' Edwin answered, with a dryness which would have snubbed anybody else.

If Mr. Arnold felt the reproof, he did not show it. He smiled, and his quick eyes ran over the young squire from head to foot —a glance quite as critical as Mrs. Downes's could have been, and very much less kind.

'There's no accounting for tastes,' he said. 'I prefer fresh air myself, and a good open view. Besides, I like to make the best of things, and some of that timber about your house would fetch money. However, it's no affair of mine. That poor old chap up at Stepford Hill is in a bad way, Mr. Dampier.'

'Do you mean old Harry Holt?'

'I do, sir. I understand he is in debt all round the country; and as to his rent, you know more about that than I do. But

Colonel Dampier is more forbearing than I should venture to be, under all the circumstances.'

'Holt has been a good farmer. It is no fault of his.'

'Perhaps not; but such tenants are more trouble and expense than they are worth, it seems to me. In fact, I sometimes think that a property like this must be—well, a blessing in disguise! I have been asked more than once if your father has ever thought of selling it.'

'Never! You may say so, Mr. Arnold, on my authority, if the question turns up again.'

'Well, I'm not surprised.' Mr. Arnold was quite aware of the angry flush, the sudden kindling of the eyes, with which young Dampier received and answered his suggestion; but it was not necessary that he should notice these signs, the younger man's tone being particularly quiet and grave. 'Nevertheless, if I were your father's man of business, that is what I should advise. The land itself is first-rate, but it wants capital, Mr. Dampier. Thousands of pounds ought to be spent on the estate at this moment. If it were in the hands of a capitalist—and of course I don't advocate selling it for nothing—the advantage to the neighbourhood would be very great, and a burden would be lifted off Colonel Dampier's shoulders—and your own. Excuse me, I'm simply putting before you the sensible business view—as a friend, you know.'

'Thank you, Mr. Arnold,' said Edwin. 'Nice day, isn't it? Are you walking all the way back?'

'I'm going to pay my respects at the farm on the way, and to ask Mrs. Downes for a cup of tea.'

'Ah—good day, then.'

'Good day, sir.'

The two men went their several ways. Joseph Arnold said to himself, 'Conceited young puppy! I should like to teach him a lesson or two. But it can't go on much longer. Why, even now his clothes are only fit for the ragman.'

Edwin muttered in confidence to himself and Don the one word, 'Brute!' He was angry with himself for feeling so sore under the double annoyance of Arnold's fault-finding and his good advice. What was it to this man if the hall was blocked up with trees, if the roads were bad, if the tenants—Mrs. Downes excepted—paid no rent, if it were only too true that the burden of the Stepford estate was almost more than its owners could bear? Of course thousands ought to be spent upon it. Who

knew that better than the man who seldom went more than a few miles beyond its limit, and knew every field, every tree, every ditch on it, in every season of the year? Did Arnold really think that he was telling Colonel Dampier's son anything he did not know already?

As the young master tramped along the hollow road, the rooks in the tall fir trees cawed high above his head, and the lambs that were running races in a field on the other side stopped and stared anxiously at Don, divided from them by a steep bank and a wild brambly hedge, where a few late primroses lingered in shelter. Then, not far off, the stable clock at the Hall struck four, and reminded Edwin of the advertisement, which had been driven from his thoughts for the time by Mr. Arnold's impertinences.

One thing was certain—he need not trouble himself about Mrs. Downes and her daughter. Whatever weak-minded scrapes they might slide into, Joseph Arnold was big enough and self-confident enough to pull them out again. Jessie Downes was too good for him, of course, and her mother was still more superior; but he was strong enough to take good care of them. A clever, intelligent man, as Mrs. Downes said, who had done wonders with himself. A capital man of business, too, and one of these days sure to be a rich man.

'Never mind, Don; we can't all be Joseph Arnolds—supposing we wished it, which we don't. I wonder now—it would be awful to have tea with Joseph—but I shouldn't mind seeing from a distance what happens this afternoon, if Jessie really does bring some poor miserable being home from Manningham! And I wonder if Mrs. Downes will show him the advertisement before Jessie comes in. I don't think she will, somehow.'

The way wound on along the hillside, the spinney on the right thinning itself out into a wild copse of oak-scrub and young fir trees covering the steep slope that ran down to the river. It was a broad stream that crept slowly, curving and winding among meadows far and near, reflecting blue sky and white sailing clouds, and the alder plantations, flushed with spring, which grew along its low banks. Further out the May sun shone over the rounded heads, bronze and gold, of the stately old oaks in the meadows. They and the tall elms marked the hedgerows; and here and there some special king among them stood by himself in the middle of a field, the cattle quietly feeding under his shade. Some of those Stepford oaks

remembered the days when all this country was forest; and it was no surprise to them when horns of long-vanished stags were found in the peat of the ditches.

Before Edwin turned in at the garden-door, he lingered a moment to let his eyes wander over the peaceful landscape at his feet. Of all times in the year, spring brings the most beauty to the everyday aspect of the Midlands. The delicate colouring of the trees adds something of enchantment to the distance of pale blue hills. Nowhere do grass and flowers grow more joyfully, nowhere do young buds smell sweeter in the fresh cool air, birds sing more musically. Nowhere does spring use her magic more successfully than in these depths of English country; and now, as in old days of poets long ago, plants and birds and beasts and men are all alike subject to her power. That old eager, restless sadness, mixed so oddly with the divinest sensations of triumphant happiness, comes alike to all Nature's children, unless they have been given over too completely to Civilisation, their stepmother, or to her who calls herself Education, their stiffening, narrowing, self-satisfied aunt.

The door in the wall opened on a flight of old brick steps, a good deal out of order, and the garden all about was wild and overgrown, though not without beauty. It straggled picturesquely over the slope, a labyrinth of narrow paths with rose arches and trellises; here and there a great tree on a patch of grass. Then more steps led up to a formal terrace with mouldy vases set at intervals on the turf and gravel, and this was divided by a rather more tidy flower-garden from the west side of the house, long, rambling, and weather-stained, with a row of windows opening to the ground. To the south the garden and terrace dropped with slopes of turf to a broad gravel drive, and the house on this side, where the chief entrance was, had a colonnade of pillars and a low flight of steps leading to the door. An avenue of oaks led away to the east, and a screen of oaks, elms, and evergreens quite hid the division between the garden and the wide sloping fields that were called the park, stretching nearly all the way to the village of Stepford. These last were the trees which had roused Mr. Joseph Arnold's indignation.

The place had an eighteenth-century air about it. It was one of those houses which want all the life and gaiety that the outside world can bring them. Constant carriages ought to have been driving up, servants moving under the colonnade,

groups of people strolling on the lawns. That broad front, with its slope to the sunny south, was made for a meet of the hounds; and indeed, there were old people at Stepford who remembered frosty mornings fifty or sixty years ago with a fine show of red coats, for Stepford Hall had been a favourite meet of the South Midlands in old Squire Dampier's days. But he died, leaving a glorious name in the country for extravagance and riot, and a much impoverished estate to the son with whom he had quarrelled many years before; who, wild in his youth, had become a distinguished soldier, and was supposed in those days to care for nothing but his profession.

After that Stepford Hall was shut up for some years, and the property was managed—mismanaged, rather—by an agent who had a good deal in common with the unjust steward in the Bible. He and several of the tenants were a good deal put out by Colonel Dampier's sudden return from India in the year following the Mutiny, now thirty years ago. He had married in India, just before coming home, a girl not half his own age, which was then about forty, and people said there was some romantic story about the marriage, but no one succeeded in finding out exactly what it was. Evidently she had no money, for they were very poor, and lived a solitary life at the old Hall. The neighbours, all more or less distant, and to whom Colonel Dampier was a stranger of unattractive character, his jolly old father having been very popular, did not press their visits where they were plainly not wanted. Colonel Dampier was a keen sportsman in his own way, but not a fox-hunter, and he had other interests which were quite independent of his neighbours. To pay his father's debts and his own; to drive away, by every means in the power of devoted love, the sad recollections which were written too plainly on his wife's delicate face; to follow out certain literary fancies which had haunted him through more than twenty years of active soldiering;—these were the objects that filled a life not without cheerfulness, till six years after the return from India, Edwin, their first and only child, was born. Two days afterwards, at the age of twenty-four, Mrs. Dampier died.

Colonel Dampier's heart and spirit both were broken. Some old friends tried to persuade him to return to his profession. It would not have been difficult to find a staff appointment for a man who had already been made a C.B. for his distinguished services, especially for the gallantry with which he had relieved

a town blockaded in the Mutiny, afterwards holding the fort with a few Englishmen and refugees against thousands of Sepoys. But he repelled every idea of active life; and for twenty-four years now he had lived a recluse at Stepford Hall. At seventy his figure was still upright and young, though his face had the worn and faded look of extreme age, and his hair had been snow white for many years. People were shy of him, even his own tenants and servants, who knew well enough that his cold and absent manners concealed a kind heart. His son never quite knew whether he had disappointed him by failing in an examination for the army. A second attempt might have succeeded, but Edwin was not hopeful by nature, and Colonel Dampier, instead of encouraging him to work hard and try again, or planning any other career in life for him, fell in very easily with the boy's own suggestion, springing half from the disgust and depression of failure, half from affection for his father, that he should live at home and help to manage the estate. Any old friends who might have interfered in Edwin's interest were dead by this time, or estranged by long silence and coldness, so that the father and son seemed to stand alone together in the world. Gradually Edwin had come to understand the truth, that his father could not do without him. Now he even wondered, sometimes almost with dismay, what would have happened if he had done his school credit and taken the first place instead of the last in that list of candidates. And yet, when he let himself think about it, he was rather sorry not to be a soldier.

When Edwin Dampier went into the house, the colonnade was in shadow, and the hall within seemed dark and gloomy. Old portraits frowned fiercely from the walls, which they shared with Indian trophies, weapons of all sorts, heads of deer and buffalo. The young man walked lightly over tiger and bear-skins to a door on the left, near the wide, uncarpeted staircase which led to an upper gallery. The room he entered had two windows looking to the west, and was full of sunshine; otherwise totally bare and comfortless. The floor was polished, the walls were coloured dark red, except a panelled space above the mantelpiece, in which was set the portrait of a young woman, eyes and mouth beautiful, but of an almost tragic sadness. There was hardly any furniture; what there was seemed lost in the large room; three or four high-backed chairs, a writing-table heaped with papers, a standing desk with books open on

it; more books on a small shelf against the wall. One large armchair in the furthest window looked comfortable and untidy. It was soon plain that this was a concession made by Colonel Dampier to the young modern bones which disliked augles and hard wood after tramping in the fields all day.

The Colonel was now standing at his desk, turning over the leaves of a book in search of some reference that seemed difficult to find. He did not even look up as Edwin came in. The young fellow crossed the room, threw himself into the armchair, and lighted a cigarette, while Don, who had followed him, lay down at his feet, and stretched out four shaggy legs in the sunshine.

Edwin took up a book which he had left in a corner of the chair, and began to read, but without much attention. His thoughts, in fact, were wandering. The book was 'The Three Musketeers,' and by some curious fate he had never read it before. D'Artagnan was a fine fellow for carving out adventures. Last night he would have sat up with him long after midnight, if his father, with the military strictness he showed now and then, had not turned out the lamp and ordered him to bed. To-day d'Artagnan was certainly the same person; but Edwin Dampier had no longer a vacant mind to offer that hero for a dwelling. It was haunted by two tormenting thoughts—Mrs. Downes's advertisement and Mr. Arnold's remarks. And Edwin could not free his mind from either encumbrance by telling his father; he had learnt discretion in that quarter by experience.

As the young fellow sat with his book in his hand, letting his eyes wander past it to the birds on the lawn, the young leaves, gold-green, shaken by the breeze, the likeness he bore to that portrait over the chimney-piece was vivid and startling. From the melancholy in his face he might himself have been that 'person in serious trouble, homeless and friendless,' who was anxious to hide as a fugitive so far from high roads and haunts of men. Naturally, as a heritage from his mother, he might have been credited with sympathy in such pathetic aspirations. But it often happens so; the soft melancholy of those eyes was something of a delusion. Behind them, Edwin Dampier himself heartily wished the advertiser at Jericho.

CHAPTER III.

THE ADVERTISER.

'She set an old wooden chair for me near the fire, and went on with her cooking. A wondrous sense of refuge and repose came upon me.'

MR. ARNOLD, arriving at the farm, was not particularly pleased to find Jessie Downes away. He sat down in the kitchen with a slightly injured air. He was tired, the room was hot, it must be quite three-quarters of an hour before Jessie came in. Mrs. Downes was busy directing her little maid, who was laying the tea-table, and presiding over some cakes that smelt remarkably good in the oven. She did not receive Joseph with quite her usual serenity, but his other grievances prevented him from noticing this. He was not aware of any double intention, when she politely proposed to make him a cup of tea at once, in case he would rather not wait to see Jessie this afternoon. The pony was tired, and she might be late coming in.

'No, thank you. I'm in no hurry; I can wait perfectly well,' replied the future son-in-law. He pulled his chair nearer the open door, and fanned himself with his hat. 'But I wish Jessie wouldn't go off at a tangent like this without letting me know. I was going over to Manningham myself to-morrow on business, and I could just as well have gone to-day. It would have been more cheerful for both of us. Either that, or Jessie might have gone to-morrow, to suit me. That's the sort of way to live—mutual consideration—so I think, at least.'

'Well, next time you must let Jessie know,' said Mrs. Downes. 'You are the busiest of the two, and I'm sure she is always pleased to conform. She had no notion, of course, that you were coming into these parts to-day. Where have you been? Up to Stepford?'

'Yes; looking after some bad debts, I'm sorry to say. All Stepford is going to the dogs as fast as possible, from the lowest labourer to the squire himself, whom I consider little better than a lunatic, and that ignorant loafing young aristocrat of a son of his.'

'Oh, come, that will do, if you please,' said Mrs. Downes, with more than a suspicion of sharpness in her gentle tone and manner. 'Kindly remember, Joseph, that no one speaks ill of the Dampier family in *my* house.'

Mr. Arnold laughed.

'I don't wish to offend you, I'm sure,' he said. 'I wish I could give a better account of your friends. Whether it's their own fault or not, the state of things gets worse every day, and as to a word of advice, you may as well offer it to the trees by the roadside. Nobody pays any rent except you, Mrs. Downes, and your rent is hardly sufficient to keep that big house going, I suppose?'

'Have you been giving advice to the Colonel?' asked Mrs. Downes, looking at him with a smile; and he, not being an ill-tempered man, smiled too.

'Do I ever see him, or does anybody else? No, but I met young Dampier just now, down there by the spinney. When I saw him first, he was sitting on the stile, profitably engaged in staring across the river. I told him he ought to cut down some trees—the house is completely smothered in them—and I asked him if his father ever thought of selling the place.'

'That was cool.'

'Cool? Well, he treated it coolly, wished me good day, and walked off without discussing the subject. One of these days, however, I rather think he will be glad to enter on it again. I know a few things—I have heard reports, at least—I'm pretty safe in saying that the present state of things at Stepford can't last much longer. But these are business secrets, and it's possible that the young fellow himself doesn't know the extent to which his father has managed to muddle and involve things. One of these days, I tell you, there will be a smash, and then Colonel Dampier will be only too glad to cut himself free of Stepford.'

'I hope that day may be far off,' said Mrs. Downes, earnestly.

Mr. Arnold laughed again and stroked his moustache.

'When that day comes, it will be a pity that young Mr. Dampier has learnt to do nothing better than smoke and loaf and stroll about and gossip in the cottages.'

'He is fit for better things, I can tell you.'

'Perhaps so. As fit as you please. But at his age a man ought to be able to earn his living, and his present way of life ain't much of a training, you'll confess.'

Mrs. Downes sighed. Though Arnold might irritate her finer feelings, his good sense was undeniable. She knew him to be a clever man of business, and feared that his information was likely to be only too true.

Presently she went out to see to the milk, and when she came

back he was standing in the doorway, looking discontentedly at his watch. His ears, like her own, were evidently bent to catch the most distant sound of wheels turning up from the cross-country lane into the field-road of the farm.

'If you can't wait,' she said, 'I'll explain to Jessie. She won't be here for half an hour yet, I dare say.'

'Oh, I can wait, thank you,' he answered. 'But that kitchen of yours is stifling on a warm afternoon like this. When people have a pretty parlour like yours, I can't think why they don't make use of it. Why don't you have tea there? Spoil the furniture? Never mind, we'll buy some more. You've brought up Jessie too careful, Mrs. Downes. Oh, of course with good intentions, but it ain't necessary now to be so saving.'

'I never was saving—on the contrary,' said Mrs. Downes, with her curious smile. 'But it happens that I like the kitchen better than the parlour, and so does Jessie.'

'Does she?' he said, with a slight sneer; but then he checked himself, for a conflict with Mrs. Downes was apt to be disagreeably unequal.

His swagger, harmless enough in itself, did not go down with her as it did with the less critical Jessie.

'I'll have a look round the rickyard,' he said, 'and a word with Hezekiah. Don't put yourself out for me. I shall hear the trap coming.'

He walked off, and she went back into the kitchen. Having inspected her cakes, and looked round at a picture of cheerful comfort which left nothing to be desired, at least to the eyes, though Mr. Arnold might have been right in thinking the fire too warm for the day, she fetched the newspaper from the top of a chest, where she had laid it aside from curious eyes after Edwin went away. Again she read over that advertisement, and again, in spite of prudence, her heart warmed to the lonely stranger who appealed so sadly to the kindness of her—or his—fellow-creatures.

'Supposing Jessie does bring some poor woman home—well, let Mr. Joseph disapprove, he's no master of mine. If he don't choose to sit down to tea with anybody my daughter brings home, why, he may go. But it's far more likely, as Mr. Edwin says, that she'll—— Jessie, how you startled me.'

Standing near the window with the paper in her hand, and being a very little deaf, she had not heard quick steps in the stone passage behind the kitchen, which led to the back door.

The steps were crossing the kitchen when she looked up, and there stood Jessie. The eyes of the mother and daughter met, and in that instant Mrs. Downes understood that whatever Jessie had done, she had not come back empty-handed. Her cheeks were rosy and her eyes round with excitement; in fact, she was quivering from head to foot in a fashion most extraordinary in so steady a person, and could hardly get out the hurried words that had to be spoken.

'Mother—oh, mother—she's here—I've brought her—but I don't know what you'll say——'

'Why—what—who is she?' cried Mrs. Downes, rather wildly, for Jessie's agitation was catching.

'Oh, mother, she's run away.'

'Oh, Jessie, what have you been and done? Then Mr. Edwin was right; he said there was sure to be something queer at the bottom of it. I did pretend not to believe him, but I've been fretting a bit ever since. I thought, though, you'd have more sense. Now look, I'll have no runaways and bad characters here, so you may just tell Hezekiah to get his coat on and drive her back to the station for the next train; or perhaps she can walk? That'll be a lesson to you, I hope.'

'Oh, mother!' Jessie began to laugh rather hysterically, but soon recovered herself, glancing round at Mrs. Downes's preparations. 'You won't send her back without a cup of tea?' she stammered out.

'I see nothing to laugh at,' said Mrs. Downes, with added sternness. 'Run away! From what, if you please? From home, or husband, or parents, or what? Is she old or young? I set my face against anything of the sort, as you might have known very well. Have you left her in the trap? You can take her out a cup of tea, if you like. I'm not going to have her sitting down with us. Besides, Joseph Arnold's here.'

For once in her life, at the mention of that name, Jessie's face fell. But she also regained her usual straightforwardness and calmness of manner.

'Where is he?' she asked.

'He went out to the rickyard; he's coming back to tea. We scarcely expected you so soon.'

'The train was extra punctual, and Fidget trotted well. But, mother, she doesn't wish to see anybody, so I'd better take her straight to her room, and she can have tea up there.'

'Have you lost your senses, Jessie?' said Mrs. Downes, with

a touch of anxiety. 'Didn't you hear all I was saying just now?'

'Yes, mother, of course. But you must see her. I oughtn't to have startled you like that just now, but really it is all so wonderful!'

'Let me see her,' said Mrs. Downes. 'There's no sense to be got out of you, that's plain.'

As Mrs. Downes advanced towards the door, the stranger tapped lightly on it and pushed it open. She was taller than Jessie, and very slender in contrast with her solid proportions. She was quietly dressed in a travelling cloak and felt hat, on which she had thrown back a rather unusually thick veil; this was the only sign of any wish to disguise or conceal herself.

'Why, it's a young lady!' said Mrs. Downes.

'Oh, mother, of course—didn't I tell you?' murmured her daughter.

'No, Jessie; you told me it was a runaway, and left me to think what I liked.'

The strange girl laughed a little, though her colour deepened as she met, eagerly and frankly, the elder woman's full and questioning gaze.

'Yes, do think what you like,' she said. 'I tell your daughter there can hardly be another person as kind as herself, but she says you are kinder, and I suppose she knows you.'

'Excuse me, but what have you done with the pony?' said Mrs. Downes.

'An old man with a long beard came round the house and took the reins. He said, "Walk in, missy," so I thought I might.'

Mrs. Downes smiled in spite of herself. Hezekiah then, that sour, suspicious, uncharitable being, had been first at the farm in offering shelter to this homeless girl. One may suspect, however, that he would have been last, instead of first, had he known the circumstances of the case; such is bucolic human nature.

But Mrs. Downes did not wonder at Hezekiah. The sweetness of the girl's voice and eyes, troubled as both were behind her thin little mask of cheerfulness; the beauty and distinction, though tinged with some slight and puzzling peculiarity, of every feature, movement, glance, and tone;—all this impressed the good mistress of the farm instantly and deeply, with a kind and degree of admiration that she never remembered feeling before.

She had always thought poor Mrs. Dampier the prettiest and the best bred person she had ever seen. But she, though so young, had always been too white, shadowy, and sad for real beauty. This girl, though tired and troubled now, had lovely tints of colour, hair that curled with natural obstinacy, and a short, fine upper lip that suggested race and high spirits.

Jessie was not so wrong; the adventure was wonderful. In an older time the right of such a young princess to reign over ordinary mortals would have been unquestioned, and people would not have approached her without kissing her hand, or some such mark of veneration. Mrs. Downes, being satisfied, contented herself with a slight and dignified curtsey. She was beginning to murmur a few words of rather formal welcome, hardly knowing how to treat such a guest, when the girl came forward with eyes suddenly swimming, and took her by both hands.

'Oh, don't speak like that! You don't know how tired I am!'

The motherliness and the romance in Mrs. Downes had a moment of triumph then.

'My dear,' she began; and she would have taken the homeless girl literally to her heart, while Jessie looked on smiling and half envious, but Mr. Arnold, having seen Hezekiah drive into the yard, appeared just then at the other door.

'Well, Jessie, you've got back in good time. But I've been saying to your mother——' He stopped short, seeing the stranger, in whose face something like terror sprang up suddenly; and the hand that Mrs. Downes was holding gripped hers tight.

Jessie turned white and red as she crossed the room to meet her lover. It was a new experience, and rather a dreadful one, to possess a secret that she must keep from him; and not being the most quick-witted of girls, she saw no way out of the moment's dilemma.

Mrs. Downes, however, was equal to the occasion.

'Did Jessie ever mention to you, Joseph,' she said, with perfect ease, 'that I was thinking of taking a lodger for the summer months?'

'No, Mrs. Downes, she didn't,' replied Mr. Arnold, too much occupied in staring at the stranger to notice Jessie's face.

'Well, she has been to Manningham to-day to meet this lady and arrange matters. You may think it queer, perhaps, that we didn't consult you; but after all, one must see to one's

own affairs in this life, I always find, if they are to be seen to at all. Don't you agree with me, Miss ——? Dear me, I'm losing my memory very fast, for I can't recall your name.'

'Miss Field, mother;' 'Field, please,' from Jessie and the stranger at once.

'Miss Field, of course! I beg your pardon, ma'am. May I make Mr. Joseph Arnold known to you, an old and particular friend of ours?'

The strange girl gave Mrs. Downes's hand another little squeeze, this time of gratitude. The look of alarm vanished from her face, and her smile was almost mischievous as she bowed to Mr. Arnold; then readily held out her hand as he crossed the room, plainly expecting it.

Her mother's manœuvre reduced Jessie to a state of wondering silence; in fact, she was afraid to open her lips in case she might spoil it. The worst of it was, she could hardly listen without breaking into smiles, so triumphantly did Mrs. Downes gallop away on the broad road of invention.

'I understand you won't object to living in our usual homely fashion,' she said to her guest. 'Mr. Arnold was finding fault with me for not setting the tea in the parlour, and if he had known everything, he might have said more.'

'I certainly should,' said Joseph, with a polite air. 'And I must say, Mrs. Downes, I think it was hardly fair on me not to mention that you expected a lady visitor. You have made me feel rather like an intruder, which is not at all what I wish to be.'

'Oh, as to that, if one makes new friends, it's not necessary to give up the old ones,' said Mrs. Downes, comfortably. 'You are welcome at all times, as you know; there's no intruding in the case. And I didn't know for certain that Miss Field would find it convenient to return with Jessie to-day.'

They all sat down to tea together. The two girls dared not look at each other; but Jessie had plenty to occupy her in pouring out tea and waiting on the others. Mr. Arnold was at first inclined to address his talk to the stranger, congratulating her on having chosen a charming spot to spend the summer in, and prophesying a country appetite—which she sorely needed—before many days were over. The more he talked to her, the more closely he watched her, and the more Mrs. Downes, dashing in at every chink, tried to guide the talk into general and less interesting subjects. Joseph's eyes were always turning

curiously back to the face and figure so evidently out of place in a farm kitchen.

'You reside at Manningham?' he asked presently; and there was uneasiness as well as haughtiness in the girl's tone and look as she answered him—

'No, I do not.'

After that Mr. Joseph asked Jessie for another cup of tea, and began talking of local subjects to her and Mrs. Downes, while the stranger remained perfectly silent. A certain constraint was felt by all, which not even Mrs. Downes could shake off successfully, and which made Jessie miserable. Everybody was glad when Arnold pushed back his chair, asked to be excused because of his long walk, shook hands all round, and left the house. At the door he turned back and beckoned to Jessie, who, with a glance at her mother, got up and followed him.

They went together silently through the courtyard, and across to the path leading through fields to the high-road. At the first gate Arnold stopped, and looked Jessie straight in the face—a face with good, honest, broad brows and truthful eyes not clever at deception.

'Now look here, it's all very well,' he said. 'I didn't want to make myself disagreeable to your mother, but I do hate these womanish ways of hiding things up and bringing out surprises at the wrong moment. How long have you had this precious plan of taking summer lodgers?'

'Oh, I can't say, I'm sure. Don't be cross with me, Joe. Mother does as she likes, and it's no use your fussing.'

'I'm never cross with you, and I never fuss, as you know perfectly well. But, in my position, it's scarcely treating me properly to establish a fresh inmate in the house without so much as a hint to me on the subject. It puts an end to some of our pleasant afternoons, anyway, if that young lady is to be always there, and a bit too grand to answer a civil question. How on earth did your mother pick her up, Jessie?'

'She—she heard of her. Ask mother herself—I can't bear you to talk to me like that.'

'Well, my dear, don't be vexed'—for Jessie spoke with a sob. 'You can't deny it shows a want of consideration for me. I don't blame *you*. There, don't worry—I know Mrs. Downes has a will of her own, and I think it's hard on *you*, Jess, as well as on me. Did she advertise for lodgers?'

'No—oh dear no!'

'How was it, then? Did she answer an advertisement?'

'Yes.'

'That young lady advertised for summer lodgings?'

'Oh—yes.'

'And have you had much correspondence with her? Where *does* she come from? She wouldn't tell me.'

'She has been staying in Manningham lately. She comes from somewhere else—I forget the name. How dreadfully curious you are to-day, Joseph, when you know the one thing I hate is to be asked questions. I shan't answer one more; and if you've taken a dislike to Miss Field, you can keep away from the Slang Farm—so there!'

'Dislike! Isn't it extraordinary the way women jump at conclusions? Why should I dislike Miss Field, a pretty girl like that? for I grant you she's pretty.'

'Perfectly lovely, I think.'

'I won't go so far as that. She doesn't look pleasant enough to be perfectly lovely—at least, she didn't look pleasant at me. When I first came in she looked as if I was a wild beast, and at tea she looked as if I was a reptile.'

'How silly you are to fancy such things! However she looked, I'm sure she thought nothing of the kind. If she did, I must make haste to teach her better,' said Jessie, more cheerfully.

'How long is she going to stay?'

'Oh, I don't know yet. Perhaps it depends on how we like each other. But, look here, Joe—why didn't you let me know you were coming over to-day?'

'I've got a crow just as black to pluck with you, Jessie, my dear. Why didn't you let me know you were going to Manningham?'

(*To be continued.*)

'THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.'

'"It will stand in need of a commentary to make it intelligible."

'"Not at all, for it is so plain, that there is no difficulty in it: children thumb it, boys read it, men understand it, and old folks commend it."'—DON QUIXOTE.

I.

SEVERAL miles from Haworth Parsonage, so runs the tale, some kind friend once found a quaintly dressed child, wandering alone and footsore. It was little Charlotte Brontë, setting forth, like Bunyan's Christian, on pilgrimage to the Celestial City.

The authoress of 'Jane Eyre' is not the only child who has believed Christian's journey to be literal history, 'quite true,' in nursery parlance; for it is as a thrilling narrative of adventure (and *not* as an allegory), that 'The Pilgrim's Progress' first appeals to boys and girls, and to uneducated minds of any age. Hazlitt tells us not to mind allegory—it won't bite or meddle with us if we leave it alone; but children are delightfully unconscious that there is any allegory to be ignored, and follow breathlessly the story of Christian's journey, his departure from the City of Destruction, his entrance through the wicket-gate, his fight with Apollyon, his imprisonment in Vanity Fair, and later in Doubting Castle, and his attainment at length to the desired goal. Every incident of the way is so full of interest, and is so forcibly described; and Bunyan's theology only very occasionally so far masters his imagination as to give us wearisome, pulpit-like digressions.

This power of imparting a spirit of reality and truthfulness to a fictional narrative, though it may receive additional radiance from a child's ready belief, will ever remain as the great charm of 'The Pilgrim's Progress.' 'Bunyan had a manner . . . like De Foe's, of creating the illusion that we are reading realities, by little touches, such as "I do not know," "He did not tell me this," and the needless introduction of particulars irrelevant to

the general plot such as we always stumble on in life, and writers of fiction usually omit.' *

This power is seen in Bunyan's descriptions of scenery, as well as in his vivid portraiture. Whatever incident he is describing, with a few graphic touches he makes us realise the 'lie of the land.' We know every inch of the country through which Christian passes; the plain between the City of Destruction and the wicket-gate; the miry Slough of Despond, the overhanging crags of the Hill of Legality; the narrow highway, bounded by high walls; the plain of Ease ('so quickly passed'); the pleasant river, then the stony way which the pilgrims left for the inviting paths of 'By-Path Meadow;'—all become as familiar to us as the country where we may live.

Take one picture only from the Pilgrim's journey. Christian, in his travels, comes to the foot of the Hill Difficulty. At the bottom of it there is a spring, at which he refreshes himself, before beginning the toilsome ascent. There are two paths going round the hill (Danger and Destruction by name), but the narrow way, which Christian has been told to follow, goes right up the hill. So the Pilgrim begins the ascent.

> '"Does the road wind uphill all the way?"
> '"Yes, to the very end."'

It is, indeed, what Bunyan graphically calls a 'breathing hill;' and we see Christian first running, then going,† then clambering upon his hands and knees, because of the steepness of the place, and very thankful when he reaches the 'pleasant arbour,' set midway up the hill, for the refreshment of travellers.

This vivid description of the scenery and circumstances of every incident is found even in Bunyan's more confessedly autobiographical writings, such as 'Grace Abounding.' 'Each crisis in his mind is always framed in the picture of some spot where it occurred.'

Bunyan's power of portraiture is another reason for the fascination of 'The Pilgrim's Progress' for children. It is often their first introduction to the captivating study of character; and it is the easiest introduction possible to meet the men and women of Bunyan's pages, each labelled with a distinct characteristic epithet. His pen and ink sketches are,

* Froude's 'Bunyan.' (English Men of Letters Series.)

† 'Going' is used by Bunyan in the sense of walking. Compare 'Must I go to him?' 'Thou must run to him, for thou hast staid so long, that going will scarce serve the turn.'—*Two Gentlemen of Verona*, act iii. sc. 1, lines 387, 388.

indeed, 'drawn from life.' Bunyan describes the actual men and women whom he knew at Bedford; and we, too, number them among our acquaintances, for human nature is essentially unchangeable, though it may don many an outward garb. For this reason, Bunyan's characters are composed of solid flesh and blood, unlike the shadowy forms of the 'Faery Queene' and other allegories, even though he himself (with his theological 'motif' ever before him) may have regretted the fact.

'It is Bunyan's own wish,' as an Italian critic has well said, 'that his creations should have more significance as names than as persons. And yet, notwithstanding all this, these personages seem to stand there in flesh and blood before us, just as people might stand to whom the caprice of their parents had given similar abstract names of virtues and vices. Bunyan would like to be, above everything else, a theologian; but the theologian in him is vanquished by the poet.'

But we pass on from the story itself, to the allegory there enshrined—

'O voi, ch'avete gl'intelletti sani,
Mirate la dottrina che s'asconde
Sotto'l velame degli versi strani.'
'Inferno,' ix.*

To regard 'The Pilgrim's Progress' as merely a poetical idealisation of the Puritan theory of salvation is a most misleading idea. It is true that there are many pages where Bunyan gives free play to his theology, where we feel we are listening to the Baptist preacher of Stuart times, rather than to the 'immortal dreamer' whose words have become our inheritance. But the keynote of the allegory is universal, in spite of its Puritan dress. Christian is a genuine man, with 'like passions' as ourselves; and the whole book is conceived and carried out in the large, wide spirit of humanity itself.

'What is it which makes man the most suffering of all creatures? It is that he has one foot in the finite and the other in the infinite, and that he is torn asunder . . . between two worlds,' wrote Lamennais. This struggle, this ceaseless warfare of man with moral evil, forms the theme alike of the English 'Pilgrim's Progress,' of the Greek 'Odyssey,' and of the Indian 'Sakyamuni.'

* 'O you that sound intelligence retain,
To scan the hidden law do you endeavour,
Below the cover of the mystic strain.'
Cayley's Translation.

Bunyan is intensely human; and he speaks to us from his heartfelt persuasion and deep religious convictions,* till we feel our own experience bearing a startling parallel to the revelations he has made, and 'recognise familiar footprints' in Christian's journey. For though Hallam may call 'The Pilgrim's Progress' the first great English novel,† we would rather say, with Montgomery, that 'Christian is a whole-length portrait of the author himself,' or, as Lowell concisely remarks, 'Bunyan is the Ulysses of his own prose-epic.'

We took one picture from the Pilgrim's journey (Christian climbing the Hill Difficulty), in illustration of Bunyan's power of scenic description. Let us now look at another of Christian's adventures, in evidence of his keen insight and knowledge of human nature.

Christian and Hopeful, having trespassed in By-Path Meadow, are captured there while asleep by Giant Despair, and imprisoned in Doubting Castle. He, being so much stronger than the weary pilgrims, forces them into a dark dungeon, where he leaves them four days without food or drink. Then, by the advice of his wife Diffidence, he beats and maltreats his prisoners, and afterwards counsels them to kill themselves. On their refusing, he 'looks ugly upon them,' and, rushing towards them, is about to kill them, when he suddenly falls into one of his fits‡ ('for he sometimes, in sunshiny weather, fell into fits'), and the prisoners escape death at that time; and, after several more days passed in misery and horrible fear, Christian opens the dungeon door with the key of Promise, and he and Hopeful escape. Giant Despair was well known to Bunyan, who, at various times in his life, had been his prisoner for months at a time; and, indeed, Doubting Castle is one of the most familiar landmarks of Christian's journey; and it is difficult to see why Bunyan, in his second 'Pilgrim's Progress,' let fancy so far conquer fact as to make Great Heart completely demolish Doubting Castle.

* The reality of Bunyan's faith only intensified, and was necessary to, his imagination. 'Religion once shaken into a "perhaps" would have had no existence to Bunyan.'

† Cf. 'Every novel, if we look at it in the right light, is an autobiography.' —'Anatole France.'

‡ An interesting commentary on Giant Despair's fits in sunshiny weather is found in Philip's account of Bunyan in the Bedford Gaol: 'All weathers were not alike to the prisoner. He felt the weight of a close or damp atmosphere. It made him so nervous in his cell, that he was often ready, he says, "to start and tremble at his own shadow" on the walls and the floor.'

Though Bunyan's style is so natural, and of such simplicity that there are many pages in 'The Pilgrim's Progress' containing no word of more than two syllables,* yet it would be a great mistake to imagine he wrote carelessly. He himself tells us that it was 'first with doing, and then with undoing, and after that with doing again,' that his books were completed.

II.

DIFFERENT opinions have been held as to the sources from whence the idea and plan of 'The Pilgrim's Progress' may have arisen. Many editors repudiate all idea of Bunyan gaining the least help from books, excepting from his Bible and Concordance,† while others (too often on a very slight foundation) seek to show that various allegories and writings may have furnished hints to the immortal dreamer.

It may be interesting to mention briefly these supposed prototypes:—

Gawin Douglas's 'Palace of Honour.'

'Pype or Tonne of the lyfe of Perfection.' 1532. (Written for nuns.)

Bolswert's 'Pilgrimage of Duyfkens and Willeykens.' 1627.‡

Bernard's 'Isle of Man.'§

Whitney's 'Emblems.' 1586.

'The Pilgrim of Loretto, performing his vow made to the glorious Virgin Mary, Mother of God.' 1630.

'Table of Cebes, the Theban.' Translated by Healey. 1616.

Bishop Patrick's 'Parable of the Pilgrim,'‖ which appeared about the same time as 'The Pilgrim's Progress.'

* See Macaulay's Essay on Southey's Edition of 'The Pilgrim's Progress.'

† Mr. Offor, one of Bunyan's later editors, mentions as proof of his originality that Bunyan makes no quotation from 'The Plaine Man's Pathway to Heaven,' by Arthur Dent, which is known to have belonged to his wife, and which he must often have read.

‡ This Dutch allegory, from the supposed resemblance of two of its cuts to scenes in 'The Pilgrim's Progress,' was at one time thought to be its original; but Southey examined it, and found the idea quite unfounded.

§ The verses in the second part of 'The Pilgrim's Progress' bear a slight resemblance to Bernard's 'Apology' for his allegory; and Bernard and Bunyan (in the 'Holy War') both depict the senses as the means of communication with the heart and soul.

‖ 'Whoever has patience to wade through the pages of Bishop Patrick's "Parable" must be fully convinced that his lordship's limping and unwieldy pilgrim will never be able, with all his hobbling, to overtake or even get within sight of John Bunyan by many a thousand miles.'

'The Pilgrimage of Perfection,' * by William Bond. 1562.

'The Wandering Knight,' † by Jean de Cartigny. 1311. Translated into English, 1611.

Langland's 'Vision of Piers Plowman.' About 1362. This celebrated allegory describes Piers Plowman journeying through the world in vain search of truth. In the second part of the poem, Piers meets with three allegorical figures, *Do Well*, *Do Better*, and *Do Best*, who teach him, in Carlyle's words, that 'all true work is sacred, having its summit in heaven.' It is difficult to see what resemblance Lord Beaconsfield and others have found between Langland's poem and Bunyan's allegory.

We come lastly to De Guileville's 'Pylgrymage of Man,' written by a Cistercian monk in 1330, and translated into English, probably by Lydgate, in the fifteenth century. As 'The Pilgrim's Progress' undoubtedly bears a striking resemblance to the French story, it may not be altogether unnecessary to give a brief account of the earlier allegory.

The writer has a vision of the heavenly city of Jerusalem, and wishes to go thither on pilgrimage. He searches for a scrip and staff, which he knows are necessary for his journey, and is met by a lady, 'Grace of God,' who instructs him, and leads him, through the waters of Baptism, into the Church. There he is confirmed, and partakes of the Holy Communion, and is instructed in the Christian faith. Armour is given him, but on his objecting to the inconvenience of wearing it, 'Memory' is called to carry it for him.

The Pilgrim then starts on his journey, and great dangers meet him. The passions, in personified form, attack and, at times, vanquish him; but 'Reason' and the 'Grace of God' constantly aid and rescue him. He meets 'Heresy,' who tries

* 'The Pilgrimage of Perfection' is divided into three parts. In the first, it is shown that the Christian life is a pilgrimage; in the second, the necessity of leaving the world; in the third, the self-pilgrim goes on a seven days' journey, assigned to the seven days of the week, the first five representing the active life of religion, and the last two the contemplative life. It is a collection of monastical literature and devotions; the very term 'perfection' is employed in the old monastical sense of the word—a life of poverty, self-denial, and devotion, and not as the name of any place to which the pilgrim is travelling.

† The wandering knight sets forth to find happiness. Guided by Dame Folly, he goes to her Palace of Worldly Felicity. When out hunting he sinks into a bog, but is rescued by a lady, 'God's Grace,' and finally reaches the Palace of Lady Vertue. The incident of the bog, which bears a faint resemblance to the Slough of Despond, is the only 'hint' which Bunyan could possibly have obtained from this French allegory.

to cut the girdle of Justice which he wears; and Satan, disguised as a hunter, seeks to entangle him in his net. He is caught by 'Fortune,' and turned round on her wheel, to the imminent peril of his life; escaping her, only to be ensnared by 'Worldly Gladness.' 'Grace' then rescues him, and takes him to the Monastery of Cisteaux, where he finds 'Discipline,' 'Abstinence,' 'Poverty,' 'Charity,' and 'Obedience.' Here he remains for thirty-nine years; but the porter being careless, and the monastery badly guarded, it is assailed and captured by 'Ennui,' 'Treason,' and 'Detraction.' The Pilgrim is carried away by these enemies, but through the help of 'Grace' and 'Prayer' he makes good his escape, and returns to the monastery. Here he is visited by two messengers, 'Prayer' and 'Worship,' who warn him of the near approach of 'Infirmity' and 'Old Age.' These two then meet, and seize him, and 'Death' strikes him with her scythe. 'Death's' words to the Pilgrim are specially interesting to readers of Bunyan's allegory: 'You are now at the wicket-gate, which, when you saw it imaged in the mirror, you so longed to reach.'

It is in no way detrimental to Bunyan's originality to maintain that this allegory may have suggested to him the plan of 'The Pilgrim's Progress.' There are so many points of likeness between Guileville's Pilgrim and Bunyan's Christian that it is difficult to regard the resemblances as purely accidental; and it is the highest proof of his genius to see how the shadows of personified vices and virtues develop into that 'amazing reality of impersonation' which is found throughout 'The Pilgrim's Progress;' while the cold, lifeless dialogue of de Guileville's abstractions gives place to the stirring narrative of Christian's progress.*

Bunyan's own life and circumstances, endowed as he was with keen insight and observation, must have furnished forth many hints for his allegory. A pilgrimage would be a custom still remembered by the Bedford folk, and Bunyan, in his early days, may have even been acquainted with those who had formed part in such a throng as Chaucer portrays in his never-fading picture.† It was a time when tales of romance and chivalry were popular. Bunyan's own words tell us in what his

* Bunyan, of course, uses the word 'progress' in the sense of 'journey.' We still speak of 'a royal progress,' and Christina Rossetti uses the word in this meaning in her poem, 'The Prince's Progress.'

† See Professor Hales's 'Folia Litteraria,' pp. 246-257.

youthful reading consisted. 'Give me a ballad, a news-book, George on Horse-back, or Bevis of Southampton; give me some book that teaches curious arts, that tells of old fables.' From such sources Bunyan may have drawn the picture of Greatheart, who is as truly a knight-errant as any we find in the pages of the 'Faery Queene,' and have introduced the startling apparition of the lions at the porter's lodge.

The famous trial of the pilgrims at Vanity Fair is an exact account of a court in Stuart times, and the proceedings those which Bunyan must have witnessed at a common English assizes. Vanity Fair itself is probably a description of the great yearly fair of Stourbridge, near Cambridge, which the 'gipsy-tinker'* must often have visited; and the Slough of Despond is identified by some editors as a bog on the road between Bedford and Newport Pagnell, while others think it coincides with Stowe's description of old Moorfields.

The picture of the Man in the Iron Cage (in the Interpreter's House) was drawn from a highly coloured narrative of the terrible death of Francis Spira, an Italian lawyer in the sixteenth century, who, having become a Protestant, was induced by worldly motives to return to the Roman Catholic Church, and died full of remorse and despair.

Probably the few Latin words and classical allusions used by Bunyan were picked up by him from Nehemiah Coxe, another imprisoned Baptist. Coxe was the grandson of a bishop, and no mean scholar, for when tried at the Bedford assizes for preaching, he pleaded first in Greek, and then in Hebrew, to the bewilderment of the lawyers.

Before leaving this part of the subject, we must notice Mandeville's account of the Perilous Valley (chap. 28), which Bunyan's Valley of the Shadow of Death strikingly resembles, though few editors seem to have noticed the coincidence.

'There is a vale which extends nearly four miles, and some call it the Enchanted Vale, some call it the Vale of Devils, and some the Perilous Vale. In that vale men hear oftentimes great tempests and thunders, and great murmurs and noises, day and night; and great noise, as it were, of tabors, and nakeres, and trumpets, as though it were of a great feast. This vale is all full of devils, and has been always; and men say there that it is one of the entrances of hell; . . . and in the centre of that

* In reference to the idea of Bunyan's gipsy descent, see 'John Bunyan and the Gipsies,' by James Simson.

vale, under a rock, is a head and the visage of a devil bodily, full horrible and dreadful to see, and it shows but the head to the shoulders; . . . and thus we passed that Perilous Vale . . . and I was more devout then than ever I was before or after, and all for the dread of fiends that I saw in divers figures; and also for the great multitude of dead bodies that I saw there lying by the way, in all the vale. . . . We were cast down and beaten down many times to the hard earth by winds, and thunders, and tempests; but evermore God of His grace helped us. And so we passed that Perilous Vale without peril and without encumbrance, thanked be Almighty God!'

III.

HAZLITT rightly calls 'The Pilgrim's Progress' a 'world's book.' It has been more universally read, and translated into more languages than any other book, excepting the Bible.

The first edition of 'The Pilgrim's Progress'* was published in 1678, and ten other editions appeared during Bunyan's lifetime. Before the end of the seventeenth century, fourteen new editions were published, and at least thirty-six before 1800. During Bunyan's lifetime one hundred thousand copies were circulated, and it was translated into Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Danish, German, Hebrew, and into the Asiatic languages. A Latin copy, entitled 'Peregrinantis Progressus,' was published. In 1681 appeared the first American edition, printed in Boston by Samuel Salt. Bunyan may refer to this in his second part, when he says—

> 'Tis in New England under such advance,
> Receives there so much loving countenance,
> As to be trimm'd, new cloth'd, and deck'd with gems,
> That it might show its features and its limbs.'

At the present time there are about three hundred English editions of 'The Pilgrim's Progress' extant, and it has been translated into more than eighty languages and dialects.

In 1683 a work by Thomas Malthus appeared, purporting to be a continuation of 'The Pilgrim's Progress,' but this forgery

* It was usually thought that Bunyan wrote the first part of 'The Pilgrim's Progress' during his imprisonment between 1661–1672; but Dr. Brown and Canon Venables show that he was again imprisoned, for six months, in 1675, and that 'The Pilgrim's Progress' was in all probability written then.

was soon silenced by Bunyan's publication of his second part* in 1684.

A third part of 'The Pilgrim's Progress' appeared anonymously in 1692. A few editors have thought it genuine, but most are agreed in rejecting it as unworthy of Bunyan's genius.

Southey mentions a Catholic adaptation of 'The Pilgrim's Progress' (1702), in which Giant Pope is omitted, and the Interpreter becomes the Director, and the House Beautiful is transformed into Grace's Hall.

There have been many attempts to versify 'The Pilgrim's Progress.' The chief versions are the following:—

1706, by Francis Hoffman.
1725, „ Dr. Dodd.
1815, „ Isaac James.
1821, „ J. B. Drayton.
1844, „ C. C. V. G.
1844, „ W. E. Hume.
1845, „ George Burder.
1853, „ Rev. J. M. Neale. (Slightly altered from Bunyan's original story.)
1854, „ Mrs. Eberle.
1882, „ Rutter.

'But all the attempts to improve Bunyan are miserable failures; it is like holding up a rushlight to increase the beauty of the moon when in its full radiance.'†

* The second part of 'The Pilgrim's Progress' is really a distinct story, greatly inferior to its predecessor. In speaking of 'The Pilgrim's Progress' in these pages, the first part, the story of Christian, is meant. In one respect only the second part shows improvement—Bunyan's verses are superior to the rhymes that appear in the first part. Notice the song of the Shepherd-boy in the Valley of Humiliation, and Valiant's song; but it must be confessed that Bunyan's muse is usually 'clad in russet, wears shoes and stockings, has a country accent, and walks along the level Bedfordshire roads.'

† 'The Pilgrim's Progress' has given rise to many curious imitations. Omitting quite modern versions, the following are the most important:—

1591, 'Pilgrimage to Paradise.' Leonard Wright.
'Pilgrim's Journey towards Heaven.' William Webster.
1621, 'Pilgrim's Practice.' Robert Bruen.
1624, 'Pilgrim's Profession.' Rev. Thomas Taylor.
1659, 'Pilgrim's Passe to the New Jerusalem.' M. R.
1687, 'Wandering Prodigal and his return.'
1698, 'Pilgrim's Progress from Quakerism to Christianity,' Francis Bugg.
1700, 'Progress of the Christian Pilgrim.'
1710, 'The Spiritual Pilgrim.' Henry Wilson.
1717, 'Desiderius, or the Original Pilgrim.' (From the Spanish.) Rev. Laurence Howel.
1741, 'The Statesman's Progress, or a Pilgrimage to Greatness.' (A satire on Sir Robert Walpole.)

An interesting story is given by Mr. Morrison in his edition of 'The Pilgrim's Progress' for Indian students. A Hindu lad from a provincial school gave a list, in his essay, of those English books (outside text-books) with which every Indian student should be familiar. First came a certain advanced political pamphlet by an Anglo-Indian official, which was enjoying a great popularity at the time, and next to it he placed 'The Pilgrim's Progress.'

Mr. Nathaniel Hill tells us of an old monk at Beirut, whose favourite companion, in his solitary evenings, was 'The Pilgrim's Progress.' 'I am still of opinion,' he used to say, 'that it is better not to marry. See what trouble Christian had with his wife and children! But I feel quite delighted to think that your Protestant friends have at least one good book to offer us.'

Of the popularity of 'The Pilgrim's Progress' in England it seems unnecessary to speak. The various editions and commentaries and lectures on it which are published every year sufficiently evidence the fact, and even Dr. Johnson wished the immortal allegory had been longer.

'In childhood we sit, as it were, on Christian's knee, listening to the tales of his

"Hair-breadth escapes
By flood and field."

In youth we join him upon his perilous journey to obtain directions for our own intended pilgrimage in the narrow way. Before manhood is matured, we know experimentally that the Slough of Despond and Doubting Castle are no fictions.'

1762, 'The Female Pilgrim, or the Travels of Hephzibah.'
1800, 'The Christian Pilgrim.' John Allen.
1812, 'Pilgrimage of Theophilus to the City of God.'
1827, 'Pilgrims of the Nineteenth Century.' Joseph Toimey. (In this the advantages of the Act of Toleration are shown.)
1843, 'Celestial Railroad.' Nathaniel Hawthorne. (A satire on the modern fashionable way of getting to heaven.)

P. E. GERTRUDE GIRDLESTONE.

'SET A THIEF——'

NOWADAYS we all have our fads (to my mind, old Boyer never showed greater sense than when he translated *that* word 'fiddle-faddle'), but that my niece Philadelphia's sailor-lover, Captain Temple (*the* Captain Temple, the man who commanded the *Sea-Urchin;* but I need not enter into *that* story, it is '*his*-story,' as my nephew Peter, who loves his joke, and is proud of his future brother-in-law, says)—that Captain Temple, a middle-aged, and, in other respects, sensible man, should be a philatelist, and a mad one at that, never ceases to amaze me.

Philatelism, if that is the word, is a 'science,' Phil is pleased to assure me in the pretty, you-must-not-contradict-me kind of way she affects in speaking of her lover.

'Captain Temple is a specialist, you know,' I heard her tell the minister one day.

A specialist! It was no wonder Mr. MacIntyre took out his specs, and looked at her over the tops of them, as he does when puzzled or surprised.

Mr. MacIntyre—he is a great friend of Phil's and mine, though we do not belong to the Kirk—*on principle* does not let the Manse children collect stamps, nor, indeed, anything else.

'Acquisition begets love of possession,' he was good enough to tell us not long ago.

'*And* selfishness,' Mrs. MacIntyre, who, like a good wife, is always ready to back her husband up, added.

It is certainly not from 'love of possession' that my poor Phil collects, but purely and simply from love of her Jack; and that 'love begets patience' is an axiom of my own I am ready enough to concede, for what with pelure paper, and quadrille paper, and *batonné* paper, and wove paper, and laid paper, and first impressions, and second impressions, and lithographs, and engravings, and grilles, and water-marks, and pin-perforations, and double-perforations, and this and that, the child, quick-silver itself by nature, gives herself a headache many a time.

'Aunt Chris' (how well I know Phil's voice when she has found a treasure)—'Aunt Chris, a penny red, *unused*, on Dickenson paper!' That discovery was well worth, in Phil's opinion, a good year's solid labour; and I must say that, little sympathy as I have with the craze myself, it did my heart good to see how pleased the child was to have found something that would please her lover.

Phil pretends that her Jack's affections are divided between his collection and herself; that, if a rose threepenny with white dots or 'network in spandrels' was forthcoming and weighed in the balance with her, *she* might be found wanting.

'He could easily find another Phil, you know'—with a little sigh and a blush (the rogue looks very pretty when she blushes)—'but a pink threepenny with white dots!'

'Phil, you little hypocrite!'

'Aunt Chris, you don't know the value of a pink threepenny with white dots.'

'I can guess at the value of Miss Philadelphia Blantyre . . .'

'To her aunt;' and Phil, perhaps, runs round the table to hug me.

When Jack goes to sea his books are left with Phil as a sacred deposit, and when he has been 'good,' which is, as I understand, when he has crossed every page of the four sheets of foreign notepaper that make up his weekly budget, she rewards him by writing to Stanley Gibbons for some stamp to 'fill up a hole,' I am afraid she says.

'Complete some issue,' her brother rebukes her.

'Never buy a stamp, or, if you do, go to some fellow at the top of the tree,' our neighbour, Major Merry of West-Dyke, always counsels.

Major Merry 'collects' himself, in an amateur way, to amuse his wife, 'poor Flora;' but he often helps Phil by lending her his magnifying glass, or by taking home a 'puzzle' to put under his microscope, and in return Phil sends Mrs. Merry her duplicates, and they have, besides, many a friendly 'swop.'

Peter's name for the major is the 'all-round man' (Phil says he might as well say 'Merry-go-round' at once). Major Merry can turn his hand to anything, knows something of everything, and in figure is pretty much the shape of a drum. Cook, doctor, carpenter, lawyer, gardener, sportsman—the major is something of all these.

'Soldier, sailor, tinker, tailor, gentleman, apothecary, plough-

boy, philatelist,' Phil chants when she sees him coming up the avenue.

Babbie, my cook (who uses the freedom of forty years—Scotch—service, and identifies herself with the family in a royal-sounding 'we'), does not 'hold' with 'gentlemen Jack-o'-all-trades,' like Major Merry. For her part, she does not see what a gentleman has to do with hammer and nails, taking the bread out of decent men's mouths; nor what business he has to go about with a little bag under his arm putting other people's pianos to rights, for all the world as if he were a tuner; nor for meddling in other folk's kitchens, setting up to know more than those who have mixed among pots and pans all their days.

'*We* ha'e sma' need *here* o' lessons in cuikin' troot,' she told him to his face, one day, when he had begged leave to take a scaly offering to the kitchen himself, and 'give that estimable woman of yours, Miss Blantyre, just the ghost of a hint.'

'Butter i' their insides indeed! *Oor* way o' t's butter i' the pan, an' a dustin' o' oat-meal, an' them that's no' content, *wants*.' Babbie has the courage of her opinions, and the major, who is a good-natured little man, enjoyed his rebuff. But, it must be confessed, the major's varied accomplishments occasionally stand in his own way. I do not listen to gossip, but from the 'friendly lady' of the district, I *know* that the Merrys' servants—they keep two—do not stay. Of course, it is silly of a girl to throw up a good place because her master insists on her starching her caps and aprons with potato water ('there is a use for everything,' and 'nothing was made for nothing,' are two of the maxims hung up in the West Dyke kitchen), or to leave, as my model Jessie Dunlop did the very second day of her service, because her master came down at six o'clock in the morning to show her how to light her fire from the top. 'Faith, an' he's a fash (troublesome person), the major,' was all her mother had to say, when I went to do my best to persuade her daughter to go back.

I know people laugh at Major Merry and his ways, but all the same he is a popular little man, and those of his neighbours who know him best, both pity and respect him; not one man in a thousand would have the patience he has with such a woman as his wife.

Peter says that to *look* at Mrs. Merry is enough; but young folks are always intolerant, and older eyes can see that Flora Merry must have been a pretty girl in the days when

her husband, unfortunately for himself, married her out of a confectioner's shop; but, pretty or not, she never could have been very wise, nor as we Scotch folk say, 'quick at the uptak.'

After thirty years of married life, Major Merry is 'Merry' still, and, somehow, I do not think he has ever accustomed himself to her use of the name, any more than to the 'Laws now!' and 'Did you ever?' that interlard every sentence; but these are small things compared to the selfishness, the caprice, the imaginary ailments of every kind that must make his life a 'hell on earth,' to quote Peter, who does not mince his words.

Babbie, whose niece was at West Dykes for the best part of a year, hints on occasions that if Major Merry would turn his attention to the reformation of his wife, instead of to that of cracked pianos and kitchen fires, it would be more to the purpose, and better for himself. I know that the doctor confided to Peter, that when Mrs. Merry was down with one of her attacks, he always felt tempted to put her under the pump; and the minister—and, whatever faults Mr. MacIntyre may have, no one can deny he is a merciful man—has said more than once, shaking his head, that he fears, if he were Mrs. Merry's husband, he would use 'correction'—meaning, I imagine, the rod. But the major never complains; the utmost he permits himself is a 'Flora, poor dear, is not very well to-day,' or 'Poor dear Flora, she is all nerves,' and then, perhaps, he gives a little sigh.

My Phil, who is a good child (I don't say it because I am her aunt), often runs over to West Dyke to sit for an hour with Mrs. Merry, and when she comes home it is always the same tale: 'Please, Aunt Chris, don't ask me about Mrs. Merry. *Poor* Major Merry!'

I am not so charitable as Phil. I have no patience with the woman, and my visits to her are few and far between; it provokes me to see a decent man like the major such a slave, and I cannot and will not stand the atmosphere of her room.

Musk and frangipanni and otto of roses combined are bad enough, but add to these pets—three pugs, a couple of Persian cats, a parrot, a macaw, a pair of love-birds, a cage of canaries, a dormouse or two, and last, but not least, the 'familiar,' as Peter calls the monkey, and the window never open, no, not even on midsummer day!

'Missie' (Missie is the monkey) 'catches cold so easily,' Mrs. Merry now and again has the grace to apologise; but as a rule, when she sees her visitors gasping and fanning themselves, it is

'Law now, you find the room 'ot; but Missie, poor dear, can't abide the winders open.'

Missie is almost as shrivelled as her mistress, and very nearly as discontented-looking; she apes, too, poor Mrs. Merry's tricks, puts her paw to her side and shakes her head, as much as to say, 'You can only guess at my sufferings;' she blinks her eyes, too, just the way her mistress does, and, to my mind, there is something almost uncanny in the whole caricature; and I often fear, when I see Major Merry lifting her down from the back of his wife's chair, that he sees the likeness, and thinks so too.

'Missie' is an inveterate little thief, and an adept at hiding away. Phil scarcely ever takes her stamps to West Dyke that she does not lose one or two, and 'always the best, Aunt Chris.' But one cannot help being amused watching the creature making the tour of Mrs. Merry's visitors, and slipping a stealthy paw into the chosen pocket, and then making a spring out of reach, with whatever may have been the treasure taken.

'Law now, Missie's as clever as a Christian,' Mrs. Merry cries, when her pet has gone through this pickpocket performance, and is engaged in tearing up a letter or handkerchief, or dissecting a watch, or stealthily hiding away some one's spectacles out of sight.

'Supposing Christians employ themselves in such a fashion,' old Mr. Henderson, another of our neighbours (and another of the people who 'cannot stand' Mrs. Merry and her ways), said, in his most severe fashion, one day that Missie had made a raid on him.

'Law now, Mr. 'Enderson, you don't think the 'eathen 'ave pockets?' was Mrs. Merry's reply; and she looked round at us, as much as to say, 'I have the old gentleman there.'

'Upon my word, madam, that is more than I can tell you.' Poor Mr. Henderson mopped his forehead.

Mrs. Merry's pets, in spite of her devotion to them, like the Major better than herself; even the melancholy 'familiar' shows her joy when her master comes into the room, and begins to jabber and chatter, leaps to his shoulder, strokes his cheek, smooths his hair, and not till her affection is expended, begins to search his pockets for the bits of biscuit or of sugar, sure to be discovered in some corner.

'Law now, Merry, how you tease the creature!' Mrs. Merry, who is jealous, complains on these occasions; and the major, with a sigh, puts Missie back on her chair.

When Phil and Mrs. Merry set to work over their stamps, it is the signal for Missie to get excited; the colours may excite her, or she may imagine herself neglected, but she immediately begins to scold and jabber, not chatter; and then the parrot and macaw join in, and, ten to one, the canaries try to burst their throats, and the din and confusion is indescribable. And Phil comes home with a headache, many a time, though she feels herself more than rewarded when the major says, in his impressive way, '*Thank you*, Miss Philadelphia;' for many of his wife's most contented hours are spent 'spoiling good stamps,' according to Phil's lover, who looks with contempt on the 'scrolls' and 'whirligigs' and 'zig-zags' of patterns that it is her ambition to cover in her album.

Mrs. Merry's friends and acquaintances are invited to design these patterns: Peter himself, one day, when in a good humour, outlined the sea-serpent, whose coils are green and brown, and over-lap; and Phil drew the pæony-rose, whose petals are 'English red, unperforated,' *cut into shape*. If Mrs. Merry had cut the 'familiar's' head off and pasted it into her book, she could not have excited more horror in Captain Temple's mind than by this piece of vandalism.

To philatelists cutting and clipping may be a sin, but I must confess that some of Mrs. Merry's work struck me—a non-philatelist—as bright and ingenious.

'Poor Flora has an eye for colour,' her husband often says, and she once could paint quite prettily, he told us one day.

It was one of the very hottest days of last summer that Phil managed to cajole Peter and myself to walk with her through the laird's woods to West Dyke. It would be cool under the trees, she assured us, and the wind was blowing off the sea, and Peter could stop at the keeper's by the way, and give his own orders about the retriever pup. And '*poor* Major Merry' had been so distressed about his wife when he called that morning, she felt the heat so much; and 'neighbours ought to be neighbourly'—a shaft which made Peter grimace.

Phil was happy; had she not a letter from her Jack, received that morning, safe in her coat pocket, where she could give it a little pat now and again?

What it is to be in love! It would be a penance for most folk to read Captain Temple's closely written sheets—Peter maintains he writes them with a pin—but Phil's quick eyes flash over the pages, and then she begins again!

I like to watch the child when Babbie brings her in her letter. Catch Babbie letting the table-maid open the door to the postman on mail days! How the face brightens, dimples, smiles; and then the blushes, the little laughs, the *seriousness*, as she thanks her Maker for her lover's safety (I know she is doing that when I see her join her hands together, and look up to the heavens), for Jack is on a nasty African station, and some people call him foolhardy—*brave*, Phil, who is a soldier's daughter, says.

Jack had sent home—of all places from Africa! but I suppose he had had a 'swop'—some Heligoland stamps, and Phil wanted Mrs. Merry to see them before she added them to his book.

'Grün ist das Gras,
Weiss ist der sand,
Roth ist die Klippen
Von Heligolandt.'

She sang the verse to some tune of her own composing as she danced along under the birch trees, stopping now and then to throw back a word to Peter or myself.

'I am glad Major Merry taught me that rhyme,' she said. 'I used to think the Heligoland stamps so ugly, crude,' she laughed; 'and to think the green, white, and red mean all that! I *wish* I knew everything, like Major Merry.'

'Let us be thankful you don't,' Peter said. The heat and the prospect of a quarter of an hour's duty visit in Mrs. Merry's drawing-room had made him—no mistake about it—cross.

The major, who had expected Phil, met us on the doorstep. 'Poor Flora' was not very well; she felt the electricity in the atmosphere, he told us.

'The atmosphere of the pugs,' Peter said, so loud I was afraid that Major Merry would hear him.

Would we go in, make our own way to the drawing-room, while he ordered tea or coffee? Would we have coffee? He had that very morning discovered a way of retaining *all* the aroma of the beans; it was wonderful, but if we would say coffee, we should judge for ourselves. The little man looked quite happy over his discovery, and the prospect of 'poor Flora' being cheered up by visitors.

Peter says a sulky woman is the ugliest thing on God's earth, and Mrs. Merry was more than sulky, she was sullen, and would scarcely return our greetings; and when Missie, who likes Peter,

flew to meet him, her mistress ordered her back to the wicker chair that is her peculiar property, in a voice that subdued all but the culprit herself: she nestled up to Peter just as if he had been her master, laid her wrinkled face against his, and began to chatter out her woes.

I shall not forget the heat of Mrs. Merry's drawing-room that afternoon; the very parrot was subdued, and sat on his perch, his head upon his breast; and the pugs lay panting in the coolest corner they could find.

'Hottish here,' Peter said, when one or two remarks had fallen flat.

''Ot? Then you have never been in Demerara,' Mrs. Merry rebuked him.

'That's where the sugar comes from, isn't it?' Peter, who was determined to be disagreeable, and knew Mrs. Merry would consider the speech as an insult, and a reference to the confectionery business, said. And I must say I trembled when I saw Mrs. Merry's face; but Phil came to the rescue.

I may as well say here that no one can resist Phil. Her brother calls her 'the Syren,' but for no other reason than that she captivated Jack Temple the first moment they met. The child has no wiles, it is her innocence and simplicity that make her charm; and I think, please God, till the day she dies she will be something of a child.

It was good to see Mrs. Merry's face relax; and presently she was quite interested in the stamps.

'Law now, what it is to have a sweet'eart!' she said, as she turned the tiny packet of different 'issues' over with her lean hand. 'They'll have cost him a pretty penny?'

Mrs. Merry when she looks up, her head on one side, and her face full of curiosity, is marvellously like the 'familiar.'

'I am afraid so.' My wise little Phil shook her head.

'How much, now?' Mrs. Merry has no delicacy.

'Far too much, Mrs. Merry.' Peter had followed Missie, who, at the sight of the stamps, had made from his shoulder for the table.

'Oh, Peter!' Phil protested.

'Quite true, Mrs. Merry"—Peter was in one of his teasing moods, and he paid no attention to Phil—'quite true, Mrs. Merry. This outbreak of Temple's—we all have our vices, as you know—at the smallest calculation, will delay Phil's marriage by a year.'

'Law now!' Mrs. Merry, forgetting the stamps, and quite interested, cried; while Poor Phil repeated her 'Oh, Peter!'

I must say I was glad that, at that moment, Major Merry summoned us to the other end of the room to inspect his wonderful coffee-pot, for I thought Phil was going to cry; she knows what Mrs. Merry's tongue is.

'You will not let Missie touch the stamps, dear Mrs. Merry,' I heard Phil say, a little anxiously, as she got up to obey the Major's call.

'Better put them back in the envelope,' I said, for I knew how many she had lost; and Missie was looking the personification of mischief as she sat on the table next her mistress.

Mrs. Merry must have objected, for Phil answered as she followed me across the room, 'Mrs. Merry says she will watch; there is no real fear, Aunt Chris.'

'Peter,' I said, when we had made our several remarks, and were sipping our coffee, which certainly was excellent, 'Peter'—I knew the major was too busy telling Phil about his wife's last bad attack, to hear what we were saying—'what made you talk such nonsense to Mrs. Merry? It will be all over the county that Jack is extravagant, and Phil's marriage put off.'

'Oh, that's all right,' Peter laughed. He was sitting facing me, and watching Missie's antics in the distance. All of a sudden he gave a start, and I saw him draw in his lips; then he said, 'Aunt Chris, please do as I tell you; go over to Mrs. Merry, and *stand between her and the major*.'

There is no mistaking when Peter is in earnest—it is not very often! So, though I was puzzled, I did as I was told, and when I had finished my coffee, I went over to Mrs. Merry—the West Dyke drawing-room is long—and stood before her chair, and made some little remark upon her new peacock chintz.

I saw Peter, who had followed me, look at the table, and then at Mrs. Merry, and then at the table again; his lips grew tighter and tighter, and I was just going to say, 'What on earth is wrong?' when he said 'Missie,' and stooping, touched Mrs. Merry's gown, just as she did herself when she was showing off her pet's pick-pocket accomplishments.

'Missie,' the creature, understood well enough what she was wanted to do, and she worked like lightning. Before Mrs. Merry knew what she was about, or could put out a hand to prevent her, the tiny paw was in her pocket, and had drawn out one of Captain Temple's packets.

For my life, could I have looked at Mrs. Merry, nor could I move; but that was just as well, perhaps, for I hid the wretched woman from her husband, and Peter did not spare her.

'Set a thief—hem,' he said. Then, under his breath, 'For Major Merry's sake I shall hold my tongue; but—*it is not the first time.* You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Mrs. Merry.'

I did not know Peter could speak so sternly. I heard Mrs. Merry give a little groan, but she did not speak, and Peter took me by the arm and led me across the room, saying, 'Come, Aunt Chris, it is time we were going home;' and Missie leapt, chattering, after us.

The major had carried Phil off to his workroom, to see some planned development of the coffee-pot, and Peter threw up the window that opened on the front of the house—I think he was choking—but no expostulations came from Mrs. Merry, though Missie seated herself on the sill.

'Peter, you will not tell Phil." It was foolish, perhaps, but I could not bear to think of the child brought face to face with such—well, it really was wickedness.

'No, I shall not tell Phil, but I think you will find Mrs. Merry will give up stamp-collecting." Peter's voice was so dry I scarcely recognised it. Then—I think he could not bear to see Major Merry—he said, 'Say good-bye to the major for me,' and swung himself out of the window, and I saw him disappear in the wood.

When he had gone I shut the window, but I did not turn my head till Missie's frantic chattering—she had gone back to her mistress—gave me courage to look round. Mrs. Merry had fainted, really fainted, perhaps for the first time in her life, and the 'familiar,' poor little creature, from the back of her chair was hanging over her in despair.

'Poor dear Major Merry!' Phil said, when at dinner that evening she told Peter how ill Mrs. Merry had been.

Poor Major Merry indeed! I did not look at Peter, when next time the major came to call, he told us very regretfully, and with many apologies to Phil, that 'Flora' had tired of her stamps. 'It was a pity,' he added; 'collecting had been both an amusement and a resource.' He ended with his little sigh.

Mrs. Merry was very wise, Peter said; and the major looked at him with astonishment.

'*Poor* Major Merry!' Often and often I echo Phil's words to myself. And '*Poor* Mrs. Merry!'—that is the worst of it.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHING AS A PROFESSION FOR GENTLEWOMEN.

'MORE openings wanted for women!'

'More women wanted to avail themselves of openings offered.'

The two cries are being simultaneously raised, and, inconsistent as they may seem, both fairly represent actual aspects of the same question, one which at this moment is sufficiently pressing.

The truth is that as regards the employment of women something very like a crisis has arisen in the labour market. On the one hand, the demand for employment is greater than ever, owing to the entrance into the arena of so many women of the upper and middle classes. Apart from actual necessity, the desire of these for 'real' work has been quickened by increased independence and improved education, while other causes have tended steadily to reduce the ability of the menfolk to maintain several women apiece in idleness, and at death to bequeath a competence to all the unwedded. Landowners are 'hard hit,' business incomes more precarious than ever, and the professional man's daughter has no longer a safe second string to her bow in 'governessing,' if she has missed the chances of the marriage market. Parents have begun to whisper the word *certificate* even when asking for a nursery governess, and even the piteous offer to accept 'No salary, but a comfortable home' will not ensure employment. More women ask for work, but a sense of uneasiness begins to creep into the minds of those who have most desired the opening of fresh careers, as they see that while the demand of the market—a brisk demand too—is for skilled labour, the supply is to a perilous extent of the unskilled. It is discouraging to hear of so many failures of women to whom employment has been given to do it—or to learn to do it, where training has been offered—as thoroughly, accurately, and punctually as an average

man would have done; in other words, of so much failure to make good their eager claim for a fair field of competition. It is perplexing to find that posts offering high salaries to women of proved capacity are actually hard to fill, and difficult to give an answer to the cynic who asks whether women are inherently incapable of assimilating training, or inherently blind to their need of it, since they seem to prefer treading each other down in the desperate competition of the unskilled to fitting themselves to do work which the world really needs, or thinks it needs. Else why the scarcity of the competent cook?

But it will perhaps be answered that professional work for women is not yet such an established fact that parents should have felt it worth while to give to their daughters what they have shrunk from no sacrifice to give to their sons, namely, a special training, or even an education of a kind which would fit the mind to receive special training if desired. Girls have not grown up in the habit of methodical work. And it may be added that the present overcrowding of the nursing profession shows not merely eager willingness to take the requisite training, but also a touching desire, not merely to do wage-earning labour, but to work for the help and comforting of humanity.

There is no doubt truth in this reply, and it is the object of the present paper to suggest the entrance of girls of education, of refinement, and earnestness into a profession which offers them a welcome and a training, where the supply of workers of the desired kind is actually at present below the demand, and where their best powers of mind and heart may find ample scope—the profession of the elementary schoolmistress.

That this profession should have been so much overlooked in the search after work is no doubt mainly due to two causes. Interesting theoretically as popular education is to every one, even to the point of fierce strife, few people know anything of its practical working. Very few have so much as entered one of the school buildings thickly dotted everywhere, or have any personal acquaintance with the teachers. It is likely, therefore, to be too readily concluded that to take up such work would mean to an educated gentlewoman a scarcely endurable descent, intellectually to a grinding of rudiments, socially to fellow-workers with whom she could have no real companionship or sympathy. It may be said at once that both conclusions are far from the truth. There is ample scope for an educated woman's

abilities in such work, for instance, as the giving of a lesson in history or geography to a large class of twelve-year-old girls, much more in the responsibilities of the head mistress of some great Board School, numbering perhaps 600 girls, with a corresponding staff of assistant teachers. There is room enough for missionary effort among these children of the poor, whose home surroundings have little civilising or formative influence. Nor is there any reason that in towns, at least, to which the ablest and most cultured members of the profession are attracted, a young lady should not find a sufficient number of congenial fellow-workers. Much of the peculiar isolation in which the elementary teachers have lived has been due to the apartness of their training, begun within the schools themselves, and completed in colleges established for their sole benefit. But these barriers are rapidly being broken down, and efforts are being made to establish a wholesome intercourse with other spheres of education, both by the going out of teachers for courses of study elsewhere, and by the coming in of young people educated at secondary schools or at home. According to present arrangements such candidates can enter at various points along the route of the teacher's usual training, according to their own acquirements, and to the satisfying of certain conditions laid down by the Education Department. Entering, as they do, a sphere where much is new, it is obvious that there must be some amount of specialist training. Perhaps the most important item will be *learning to teach.*

It will be best for the present purpose to give as briefly as possible an account of the route by which a child beginning as a scholar in the elementary school can obtain the certificate of the Education Department, which is her qualification for taking independent charge of a school, and to indicate the permitted variations. To do this it will be necessary to give some dry details.

It must first be understood that by an elementary school is meant one, whether 'Board' or 'Voluntary,' in which the education is given free, or at fees averaging not more than ninepence a week, which is recognised by the Education Department as efficient, and receives a grant under the recommendation of her Majesty's inspector. In one case the Board, in the other the Managers' Committee, appoint the teachers, whether head, assistant, or pupil teachers for training.

A girl may become a *probationer* when between thirteen and

sixteen, producing certificates of health and character, and passing an easy examination in the three R's, rudimentary history and geography, needlework, and (optionally) elementary science. Or, if fifteen, she may at once enter for the test, and be apprenticed as a *pupil teacher*. This apprenticeship usually lasts four years, but may be shortened with consent of managers to three or two, or even to one year, provided that the candidate is eighteen when she goes up for the last of the annual examinations by which progress is tested. During apprenticeship she will have received a small salary, rising perhaps yearly from £12 to £20, even the probationer receiving perhaps £6 a year. Besides this she will be given, *entirely free*, regular instruction, either from a qualified teacher in the school, or at a *centre* organised for the purpose. She will have been employed in actual teaching during not less than three, or more than six hours, on any of the five days of the school week. The last examination is called the '*Admission*,' or '*Queen's Scholarship* Examination,' because it qualifies candidates placed in Class I. or II. of the pass list to become Queen's Scholars, *i.e.* accepted students in a training college. Two attempts to pass it are allowed, and those who are not able or do not desire to enter a college are qualified by their pass to become at once assistant teachers. Those who enter a college receive there a course of two years' training, occasionally extended in the case of a specially promising student to three years. If the college is a residential one, they are boarded, lodged, and trained *gratis*, except for an entrance fee, which varies considerably at different establishments. Thus, Wandsworth, Roman Catholic, requires only £5, and of this the Catholic School Committee pay half; Homerton, undenominational, £22; Tottenham, Anglican, £20; and Truro, Anglican, £10. There are various scholarships and special advantages to local and other selected students at most colleges. There are also a number of day colleges, working in connection with a recognised university or college of that rank, as at Bangor and Bristol. A hostel or boarding-house is usually attached, and the terms of these colleges vary also. Whether at a residential or a day college, the student will be required to 'sit' for an examination appointed for the end of each of the two years of study, and the passing of the second gives the full qualification of the certificate. There is only one kind of certificate, but the right to superintend pupil teachers is given to those placed in the first or second class in the final *certificate*

examination. Those who have not passed through college can proceed in the same way as the Queen's Scholars, as regards 'sitting' for the final examinations. A majority of these serve as assistants in schools while preparing; but this course is a severe strain on the health, and ought, if possible, to be avoided. Instruction in the art of teaching, with actual practice in an ordinary elementary school, is an important part of the training college course, and naturally of great value to candidates from outside. Another advantage of the college course is that 'trained' teachers, as ex-students are technically called, have a better chance of obtaining good posts, the comparison being, however, with those who have had no compensating opportunities, such as, for instance, a residence at Girton.

So far the usual course; the principal deviations allowed are these. The pupil-teacher stage may be reduced to one year only if the candidate has passed, not more than two years previously, the Oxford or Cambridge Junior Local, or has taken first class in the College of Preceptors' Certificate Examination, or other examination approved by the Department, and if the close of her engagement will find her over eighteen. She must, of course, find a school where the managers will consent to take her for so short a term; in such a case, personal friendship with managers or head mistress and her own earnestness will smooth her way. Again, a girl over eighteen may obtain from the secretary of the Education Department a syllabus of the Queen's Scholarship Examination, and leave to present herself for it, without having been a pupil teacher at all, if she has already passed one of a number of examinations approved by the Department. A list of these will be found in the *Code of Regulations for Day Schools*, which can be had for 5½*d.* from Eyre and Spottiswoode, from Menzies, Edinburgh, and Hodges and Figgis, Dublin. A copy of this Code will be found very useful by any intending applicant.

Again, direct entrance to a training college, omitting the scholarship examination, may be given to students who are university graduates, or, where a degree is not given, 'persons qualified by examination to become graduates' in arts or science of any university or college of that rank. Or such graduates may become assistants at once, and may then, after not less than a year spent in teaching at a school or pupil-teacher centre, attempt the second of the two examinations for certificate. Or they may be allowed to take one year's course in

a college, entering as second-year students, and so obtaining a short special training. This may also be done by teachers who have gained their certificate without a two years' college course. A still higher privilege is allowed to graduates who hold in addition a certificate of proficiency in the theory and practice of teaching granted by a university or college, and recognised by the Department. They may at once receive the elementary teacher's certificate. A list of the examinations now recognised for this purpose will be found in the Code.

It will be seen from these details that a girl may (1) combine her studies till she is thirteen to sixteen and enter as a pupil teacher, or (2) pass the 'Junior Local' and begin apprenticeship at seventeen, or (3) at eighteen or over go up for 'Queen's Scholarship,' or (4) pass a higher outside examination and enter as assistant mistress, or (5) become a graduate and enter a training college, or (6) gain the certificate and take a year at a college, or (7) omit this training, or (8) with very high qualification from outside receive the teacher's certificate, probably with a short probation in an elementary school.

Now as to the important question of incomes to be earned. The amount will naturally vary with the widely different conditions of the schools, ranging as they do from little country buildings where the average attendance may be no more than thirty to the vast town establishments where the girls' department alone numbers several hundred, and the widest permitted range of subjects will be taught. In the country a house will probably be provided, and other duties may be asked of the schoolmistress, such as Sunday school teaching or organ playing, which will add to her income. A head mistress, therefore, may earn anything between £60 with house in the country, and £250 without one in a town. Assistants' salaries will be proportionately lower. Equally different and appealing to different tastes will be the conditions of life and work. In the country village the teaching will be more rudimentary, but a high moral and religious influence will be of the deepest value. In the country town there will be greater opportunities of self-improvement and recreation; in the great city Board School the work will be more stimulating, the interests more varied, the need of an earnest and religious spirit most pressing, and of course there will be greater strain on all the powers. But it must not be forgotten that the teacher has a wholesome amount of recognised leisure. Her evenings and the whole of Saturday

and Sunday are at her command, and there are of course the regular school holidays.

It will be seen that the profession offers work to girls who have had a good education, and offers also an opportunity which should be of the greatest value to daughters of impoverished families, that of completing their education almost without cost to their parents. A word may be added as to the absolutely unqualified assistant teachers of whom mention has been made. There is an opening here for those who, being past early girlhood and having had but a limited education, have nevertheless a genuine love of teaching. *Article* 68 of the Code enacts that in mixed and girls' schools and in infant schools and classes, and also in boys' schools up to Standard III., any woman over eighteen, approved by her Majesty's inspector and employed during the whole school hours, may be recognised as an *additional teacher*. At this moment a number of women are in this way doing useful work. Of course the pay is low, the position precarious, liable at any moment to be abolished by fresh enactments, and promotion is impossible, unless the regular course leading to the certificate is followed. Still there are cases in which *res angusta domi* might be alleviated by such a post, while in others a girl might make it a stepping-stone, a means, so to speak, of entering the army through the militia.

It may be well to add that possibly some changes in the existing pupil teacher system may result from recommendations of the Departmental Committee, the Report of whose inquiry has recently been laid on the table of the House of Commons. Such changes, however, should any be made, will certainly tend towards increased freedom of communication between elementary schools and other systems of education.

LOUISE F. FIELD.

THE MAIN CHANCE.

BY CHRISTABEL R. COLERIDGE, AUTHOR OF 'WAYNFLETE,' 'THE TENDER MERCIES OF THE GOOD,' 'THE PROPHET'S MANTLE,' ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.

TWO VOICES.

WHEN the meeting was over, Guy found a letter from his brother Godfrey, full of details of his new Queensland home, and expressing entire satisfaction with it.

'It was the best move that I ever made,' he wrote. 'I feel that I've found my vocation. You know I never could take to the business—never felt I was any good at grasping it. And as for Waynflete, I hated it. I always felt that it was a drag upon us both. I don't believe Aunt Margaret ought to have set herself on getting it back. It's impossible to do any good with it; and, besides, I had my experiences as well as you, and there was something there that made me feel cold in the small of my back, and took the heart out of me. I never want to see it again, and wish somehow that you were quit of it. Rank heresy and treason, you think, don't you? But give me the new world, with no old ghosts in it, for me and mine.'

The letter went on about his wife's extraordinary cleverness in colonial housekeeping, and how they meant to spend a month or two each year in Brisbane, where Constance would astonish the native ladies, and set them all to work. The letter was as hopeful and cheerful as could be.

But Guy laid it down with a sinking heart. So Godfrey thought that the battle over Waynflete could never be won, and Guy did not for a moment doubt that his brother had warrant for his opinion. Godfrey had deserted him, most affectionately, reasonably, and justifiably—but he had deserted him. He had, as he had once declared he never would do, 'left him alone with the ghost.'

'I'd like to tell Godfrey that the coal had pulled us through,'

said Guy, to himself. He resented the desertion also in that softer underside which so rarely came uppermost. He sorely missed the only kinsman he had alive; now, too, that of the nearer and dearer one, he dared not think. He sat looking sadly into the fire, and his little dog jumped on his knee. Guy pulled the creature's long-fringed ears, and looked into his speaking, amber eyes, whispering—

'Rawdie, Rawdie, old man, what shining place in the dog-star is reserved for you? *You* don't funk it. What did you see, my lad, last night up in the corner, when first your hair all stood out like a bottle brush, and then went down flat, and you whined and shivered, but you didn't turn tail, though I set the door open? What was it, Rawdie? Did any poor shivering hound creep home, tail between his legs, after *him* that day, when he'd made his poor bargain, his soul for his land and his life. Did he *run* when the foe came, and is he sitting and begging at the gate of Paradise still? Rawdie, you'll not go into the dog-star without him? Rawdie, if *we* could run away, and "go to Hyères for a change" and see *her*, and look into her dear eyes, Rawdie? Why not? No, no, this won't do, old fellow; this won't do, any of it. It was *rats*, Rawdie—rats that you heard last night. It's so much better to believe it was rats!'

Rawdie had listened to his master's confidences with sympathetic attention, emphasised by licks, until this magic word caught his ears, when he bounded off Guy's lap, barked and rushed wildly about, then plunged head foremost into the waste paper basket.

'What's up?' said Staunton, coming in—'cats or burglars?'

'Hallucinations, too literally interpreted,' said Guy. 'Rawdie is hunting subjective rats.'

'Meeting gone off to your satisfaction?'

'Yes, it does seem as if something would come of it,' said Guy, more cheerfully. 'But, come, let me hear your day's work. I'm inclined for it.'

He leant idly back in his chair, and listened, while Cuthbert, nothing loath, read aloud to him his carefully thought out, scholarly, and delicately-expressed comment on the second book of 'The Faëry Queene.' Every allusion was explained, every confused thread straightened and disentangled, every beautiful passage noted; yet as Guy listened to Guyon's struggle with temptation, he wondered how his friend knew anything about it. What impulses had Staunton to upset his daily

routine? What struggles were there in his kindly gentle life? What perplexing questions had he to decide? Whether he could give his sisters their annual foreign trip, and secure his own as well. The decision was generally unselfish, but Guy felt bitterly that it was comparatively easy. He sat up, and, half perhaps from the teasing desire to contradict any argument offered to him, and to pick holes in any enthusiasm—which was part of his 'canny' northern temper—half from impulses which he could not quite control, began to dispute the advantages of temperance. He never owned to general reading; but he put forward up-to-date subversive, paradoxical arguments in favour of self-development at all costs, with cynical terseness. The man who fulfilled his destiny got, and was, something. What was left when he checked himself and stopped himself short at every turn? Apart from self-interest, with which he would not quarrel, how was the prudent man better than his fellows? The Bacchanals represented a great truth.

If nothing but evil comes of letting one's self go, and following nature, then must the soul of the universe be evil also. And then where is any good?

His remarks were not particularly original, but they had more force from human lips than between the carefully-studied backs of an oblong *fin de siècle* story-book. Cuthbert eyed him uneasily.

He knew what the external temptation of the Waynfletes had been, and had noted that since his coming Guy, always abstemious, had never touched wine or spirits in any form.

'There is more than one nature, I suppose,' he said, 'to which a man may give vent.'

'Dualism,' said Guy, 'is a most disintegrating creed.'

Cuthbert's reply, if he had one, was interrupted by a summons to Guy.

'Young Cooper, to see you, sir, if you please.'

Guy started up, and went off hurriedly, putting his head in again as he shut the door to say, 'If I'm kept, don't wait dinner for me.'

He had hardly gone, when Mr. Lennox was shown in, asking for last week's *Rilston Mercury*, containing a letter from some aggrieved parishioner. While Cuthbert searched for it, he said—

'Waynflete has no peace; young Cooper, or some one, hunted him out just as he had got in from his meeting.'

'Ah,' said the vicar, 'I wonder if Waynflete would forgive

me if I thanked him for that piece of work? Hardly; he'd think it was more his business than mine; and hereabouts, it's not only that the right hand won't let the left hand know what it's doing, but will catch the left a good clout if it dares to offer a helping finger!'

'What is he up to?' said Staunton, curiously.

'Well, a grandson of his old manager, Cooper, took some time ago to drink, and his young wife, a "stranger," as they say, did confide in me, but warned me off her husband, because, she said, "Mr. Guy" knew, and Jos might heed *him*. Well, I gave her what advice I could, practical and spiritual; and I have discovered that "Mr. Guy" some months ago found it out, and fairly gripped hold of the poor fellow, and has been fighting it out side by side with him, going home with him, staying till he was safe in bed, fighting the devil with and for him, telling him that there was a Power strong enough to save him; and when he said he couldn't grasp it, saying, "At least you can grip hold of me, and I'll not let It or you go; I'm holding on." Mrs. Cooper's much more hopeful, and thinks her husband will right himself. But it all has to be done under the rose, for Cooper's an overlooker, and it couldn't be allowed that the master winked at it.'

'So that's what he has been spending his evenings over,' said Cuthbert.

'It strikes me as remarkable?' said the vicar, in an interrogative tone.

'It is,' said Cuthbert, emphatically. 'Don't speak to him about it. There's a strong tie between him and the Coopers; the father and grandfather have worked for him, and he wouldn't like it.'

'I shouldn't dare to meddle,' said Mr. Lennox; 'but I hope I shall some day know him better.'

'I wish you did,' said Cuthbert, in a voice out of which he could not quite keep his anxiety. Guy's secrets weighed on him.

Guy returned only a little late for dinner, in a quieter frame of mind. He asked Cuthbert if he liked the wine he was drinking, if his room was warm enough, if he had got one or two newspapers ordered from the local shop safely, as if he had a wistful sense that he was making only a half-return for his friend's kindness. Perhaps he seemed indifferent; but if Cuthbert only knew how his quiet presence was valued! This unexpressed thought sometimes troubled him.

His brother's letter made him feel how close Waynflete was

to his heart. He clung to it with a passion of which he could give no account. Gladly would he be a poor man all his life, if he could just scrape on with honour and honesty—just do it enough justice not to feel that his ownership was an injury both to the land and its inhabitants.

In a few days' time Wickham gave him to understand that if he wanted to turn his offered shares into ready money, the thing could be done. There was a little transparent mystery, but Guy knew very well that Maxwell Mervyn was prepared to buy them.

From what straits the sum offered would relieve him, he only knew; from what shifts it would enable him to turn away, he feared to think. Of course it only procured a respite, but time is often everything in such a trade as his. His ventures were shrewd if he had capital to hold on with while they were on their trial, and matters might soon mend. He had no knowledge of anything that could cast a doubt on the report of the value of the shares. He would be the first to say that old local notions were worthless as compared to the verdict of modern science. Why hesitate? As he lay in bed and thought of the matter during the wakeful night, there came to him one of those strange internal visions in which his thoughts or fears now and again took shape.

'In his mind's eye,' he saw himself a manager in some one else's mill, working for a salary at another man's orders, and he knew that the man for whom he worked was Greenaway, his successful rival. He realised the humiliation of this, the failure that would have led to it, the agony of having ruined the good old name which had been left in his hands. Better sell Waynflete than that. Guy's nature was in two halves, no spiritual, no transcendental experiences lessened this most human anguish, or rather had he not always felt that defeat in one sphere symbolised and indicated defeat in another? He was, as the older Cooper was wont to say, 'his old auntie's own lad,' and all the pride and grit of her vigorous heart had come to him. Then what held him back? No vision, even in his mind's eye, but an obstinate, weighty conviction that the whole thing was a mistake, that his dream of 'thick, black, level coal' under his land was a delusion and a snare. But for this conviction he could give no reason.

'It's what Balaam felt when he couldn't curse Israel,' he said to himself. But the inward conviction only recurred at intervals,

and, like Balaam, he went to talk the matter over again with Wickham. He was nervous, he said to himself, and he couldn't trust his own feelings.

Wickham did not press him, nor did he tell him he had sold his own shares, only observing that he thought he had been lucky to get them. He discussed whether if the post of manager was offered him, he should consent to take it.

'I should be sorry,' he said, 'to desert old Raby, who has been a good friend to me; but the Ingleby pits have seen their best days, and it is very important to me that this new scheme should be a success. I shall be up a very tall tree if it turned out I'd made a mistake.'

'That's so,' said Guy, with a certain satisfaction,

'Material interests,' said Wickham, 'have set occult ones on one side lately; but here's rather a good pamphlet I came across "*Re* Presentiments and Monitions,"—Socrates' Daimon kind of thing, you know, shows how often they occur without any foundation. A man feels it borne in upon him that he must do something, and, after all, it doesn't matter a hang whether he does it or not. Like to see it? It tells in favour of my view, you know, that these things all have their origin in brain impressions.'

'Not at all,' said Guy. 'Mocking fiends are said to enjoy getting a rise out of credulous humanity. Oh yes, I'll read it.'

'Well,' said Wickham, 'even fiends can't invent geological strata.'

And Guy, to use his own simile, listened to the messengers of Balaam, and empowered Wickham to enter into negotiations for him for the sale of his shares in the new company.

CHAPTER XVIII.

JOINING FORCES.

IT needed nothing more occult and uncommon than the insight and observation of a loving heart to confirm Florella, day by day and week by week, in her belief that things were wrong with Guy. She missed happiness, she missed confidence in his brief and laboured letters, as she said to herself, she missed *him*. She knew, whether because her soul touched that boundary which he had forbidden her to pass, or by the sensitive instincts of a lover, that he withdrew himself from her, and did not mean her to know it.

This perception raised no touch of jealousy, no breath of suspicion in her mind, but it did raise in her a great fear for his welfare. Whatever she knew, or did not know, about the experiences of his earlier life, he could not dread their return more than she did. She was not happy about his worldly affairs—that photograph of the Randalls' absent son perplexed her; but her fears went far beyond the possibility of his new acquaintance turning out a rogue.

She saw something of the two old people, for Mrs. Palmer was a kind though indolent person, and hearing of compatriots in poor circumstances, sent fruit, and invited Mrs. Randall to drive with her, while Molly Edgell was of course a connecting link. Florella could not feel certain of the truth of her surmise, but it helped to make her anxious about Guy.

It would not appear strange to any one else that she dreamed of her lover, and yet that she constantly did so was significant to herself, for in her dreams Guy did not hold himself aloof. They were often vague and formless, often nothing remained of them when she woke but the certain impression of his recent presence. This happened not every night, but many times, and at last one morning she awoke in the radiance of a Mediterranean dawn, with the sound of his voice in her ears saying, 'Come.'

She got up, pulled aside blind and curtain, and then, lying down again, let the conviction of his need of her rise slowly up and fill her soul.

She was not careful to decide from what sources this conviction had sprung, or by what influences it had been slowly matured within her. What did that matter? It was there; nor did it trouble her that to no others could she prove that it was no impulse of nervous anxiety for his safety, nor natural yearning for his presence. She knew herself that he had need of her, and that she must go. But how? Even while she felt this conviction of his need, she was still afraid of displeasing him by any unconventional action, perfectly aware that she must do nothing conspicuous or that would excite remark. Her movements were hampered by all the restrictions of youth and sex. Still she must go. Apart from him, she could not effectually reach him, though, with courage and with prayer, she laid her fair soul open to every influence that affected his. 'If I could get between,' she thought. But nothing came into the range of her mental vision, but 'Guy in the picture' or 'Guy in the flesh,' as if the same soul appealed to her in either form.

How could this difficult thing be done?

As she turned over possibilities in her mind, her aunt's maid brought her coffee and her letters. There was one from Miss Raby, which she opened quickly.

It contained a casual allusion to the new coal company, and several remarks on the cleverness of Mr. Wickham, who was going to show every one how to make a fortune. Then it went on to say that the theatricals of which, as Florella knew, they had been talking in the summer, were really going to happen after Christmas. That Mr. Wickham would act, and Mr. Staunton had been dragged in to help them. Guy Waynflete was unpersuadable. It would be too lovely if they could have Florella to come and spend Christmas and help. She would make it all artistic, and could, Miss Raby was sure, act anything. Was it quite out of the question?

At another time Florella would have put aside the suggestion with a smile. She had self-possession and a sense of humour, and had an incontestable little faculty for playing comic parts; but to go home from the Riviera for the purpose would certainly have been out of the question.

Now, the suggestion offered possibilities, though it had hardly seemed possible to Miss Raby herself.

Florella dressed quickly and went down to her aunt's room. It would be necessary to tell her something of the truth.

'Aunt Connie,' she said, 'I've got something important on my mind; Minnie Raby wants me to go to them for Christmas to help with some acting. I should not think of it, but I am anxious about Guy. I know that he is not well, and I know he is worried. I want very much to see him and talk to him. Will you let me go without asking more questions? I will come back again, and I feel sure that I ought to do it.'

'Has Guy written to ask you?'

'Oh no! And I shall not tell him till I am there. I want to take him by surprise.'

Mrs. Palmer reflected that there might unfortunately be much practical reason for Guy and Florella to talk over their affairs together, before they fixed their marriage day. She had also hardly left off thinking that he was delicate, and that his health might cause anxiety. And, besides, she was a kindly soul; and what could be more natural than that Florella should wish to share with him in the Christmas gaieties of Ingleby? She could manage without her for a little while now that she was

settled into her hotel. She naturally, however, raised objections which Florella combated.

Yes, she had plenty of frocks for the Kirton gaieties. Molly Edgell was going home to new work, a temporary post having turned up, she could travel with her. She should come back again; and though she knew it would cost her a good deal of money, she had made up her mind that she ought to spend it.

The point was carried, the arrangements made, the delighted Miss Raby received an unexpected promise of Florella's assistance, with an injunction of strict secresy on the subject, Florella honestly saying that she wished to surprise Guy. Mrs. Palmer said that the return journey at least was her affair, and produced a helpful cheque. Molly Edgell was delighted at her travelling companion, and was the only person who said 'I wonder why you want to go.'

But even she set it down to infatuation about 'that man in Yorkshire.'

On the day before her journey, Florella took some grapes and roses to Mrs. Randall from her aunt. The little old lady was alone. Mr. Randall was out, and Molly also, making last sketches and scribbles for her intended papers. She had told Florella that the delayed allowance had just appeared at the bank from which it was forwarded.

Mrs. Randall was grateful, appreciated the grapes, which were of a fine sort, and quite casually and accidentally remarked upon the beauty of their growth.

'It is so difficult to get gardeners to thin them properly,' she said, 'and to leave just enough leaves to give them sun without scorching them. My son, who was fond of all kinds of mechanical contrivances, once made a very clever arrangement for heating——' she broke off, looking frightened, and sighed heavily.

'I had a son once,' she said, 'a young engineer.'

'You must feel the want of him very much,' said Florella.

'Ah, my dear,' said the little pale lady, 'I've often envied the poor souls here, who have prayers and masses said for their lost ones. It must comfort their hearts.'

'But don't you pray hard for your son?' said Florella.

'No, my dear,' said Mrs. Randall. 'I am afraid I have never known much about prayer. It can't put the clock back.'

'If one prays and sends out all one's soul, and all the spirit in one's soul to help another, somehow the outside things often come round too,' said Florella, with earnestness.

Mrs. Randall kissed her, wiped away a tear or two, begged her in a whisper to forget that she had spoken of her absent son, and resumed her ordinary manner.

A few days later, Cuthbert Staunton was sitting at his writing, while Guy was doing his morning's work at the mill. Cuthbert was more than ever anxious and unhappy. He had known formerly how to deal with his friend, cowed and stricken by a strange visitation, but still himself, and clinging to the friendly hand outstretched to help him; but this defiant, changed, secretive person, on guard at all points, was far more unmanageable and incomprehensible.

Cuthbert had never been afraid of what he had somewhat irreverently been wont to term 'Guy's fiend,' but he began to have a certain nervous discomfort in the presence of Guy himself. This of course must not be given way to.

He was taking himself to task when there was a little stir and bustle outside, the door opened, and, suddenly and composedly, the servant announced—

'Miss Vyner,' and in walked Florella in a pretty fur-trimmed cloak and hat.

'Florella! You! Florella! What an unspeakable, what an amazing comfort! I never was so glad to see any one in my life!'

'I am glad you are glad,' she said rather tremulously, as she met his outstretched hands. 'I felt I must come.'

'But how—why? Why did you come?' said Cuthbert, beginning to be surprised; while Rawdie raced in and echoed his greeting with every variety of welcoming whine, bark, and wriggle.

'I have come for the Kirkton acting,' she said. 'I came yesterday. But Guy is in trouble. I've known it for weeks, that is I have thought it, at last I was quite sure. There was no use in writing to ask him, he would not have told me. No, he said nothing, and you said nothing; but I knew he wanted me, I had it to do.'

'There he is,' said Cuthbert, as Guy's step, slow and weary, sounded in the hall.

The colour surged over Florella's face, her mouth trembled as she turned towards the door. Nature was too strong for Guy, he rushed at her with a great outcry of rapture, and Cuthbert removed himself in haste.

Pretty soon came the luncheon bell, and a commotion, as the

old housekeeper came to take Miss Vyner upstairs to take off her hat. Guy presently reappeared, having changed both his coat and his countenance. He was much agitated, but all alive and human.

Rawdie scuttered after Florella, ears and tail several inches higher than they had been of late.

There was a furbishing up of the dining-room, a new plant on the table, apologies from the housekeeper for 'having nothing fit for a lady,' sunshine suddenly burst through the clouds and shone through the windows. All was new.

Florella was quiet, and a little shy; but Cuthbert thought how sweet she looked with the wintry sunlight shining in on her brown hair. They talked commonplaces all through the meal, chiefly about the Kirkton acting; and Florella fed Rawdie with unlawful dainties.

'Well,' said Staunton, cheerily, when the meal was over, 'I'll go for a smoke and a walk. Lovely weather.'

'No,' said Guy, who had grown pale and grave again; 'I would rather you heard me tell Florella what she must know.'

Cuthbert looked at Florella, and as she made a little movement with her hand, sad and yet confiding, he followed the pair into the study, and sat down a little apart. Florella sat down also, and Rawdie jumped upon her lap. Guy stood up by the fire, and in brief, cool, business-like tones, repeated the incredible story which he had previously told to Cuthbert, adding that it must be obvious both to herself and Staunton that she ought to have nothing to do with himself or his companion, whether he was deluded or possessed.

Florella listened with serious unstartled eyes.

'But,' she said, 'I began to help you—to help that poor Guy in the picture a long time ago. You asked me to pray for him, and I have. Doesn't it seem as if that might have helped him to struggle? I can't give him up now.'

'Would you expect me to let you come near me if I was fighting for my life at long odds?' said Guy.

'If you were fighting all by yourself,' she answered, 'I should run out and hand you the cartridges. Yes; and I would fire the gun if your hand was wounded. Could I help it, Cuthbert? Could any one?'

'I suppose you couldn't,' said Cuthbert, inadequately.

'If I was obliged to know a villain and a scoundrel,' said Guy, 'I shouldn't let you come in contact with him.'

'If I thought he was doing you harm, I should go and remonstrate with him,' she said.

'Florella!' cried Guy, with passion, 'Staunton here thinks I'm crazy; any how I'm out of longitude and latitude, where there's no atmosphere, no natural laws, day doesn't follow night, nor summer winter. The pole star doesn't point north there. I've taken my soul in my hand; but I know what's right here—from man to woman, and from me to you. I've got to separate myself and keep apart.'

'And isn't there any love in this place without an atmosphere?' she said, with a shake in her voice.

'Love?' said Guy. 'Oh, my own dear love, you don't know what your beautiful soul would touch! You cannot tell—you cannot tell! Oh, my sweet, if I were mad, if I were wicked, I might break your heart, but I shouldn't injure you; but if through me, that you might help me, I let that evil presence into your soul, oh, better indeed that a millstone were round my neck and I were drowned in the depths of the sea—better he had his will of me!'

Florella shook from head to foot. While he was repelling her, he had thrown his arms round her, and was holding her tight.

She hid her face on his breast, and spoke sobbing—

'But I shouldn't notice that bad one; there are plenty of good ones too. You can't do it alone. Jesus is there. He would take care of me. You know,' she looked up, and spoke decidedly, 'if it is not all a delusion—if there is any truth in what you say, He must be there.'

'That is so,' said Cuthbert, most unexpectedly to himself. 'If this is an experience at all, it cannot be confined to Guy; he has no right to ignore the evidence of other explorers in the same field.'

'Jesus went through it alone,' said Guy.

'That we should not be alone,' said Florella.

Guy turned away, and leant on the mantelpiece, with his back towards her. He was shaken and perplexed. She stood upright, and spoke firmly, with a look, wonderful to Cuthbert, in her fine, thoughtful eyes.

'Guy has no right,' she said, 'to limit what my soul shall do. He has no right to make me shirk because he is afraid of shirking himself. He feels within him—Cuthbert, you know what I mean—a power that is weakness, a will that is bad,

and he is fighting it. He wants to keep me apart, for fear I should feel this; but he forgets how weak and bad I should be if I agreed. I will not—Guy—Guy—you know you can't—you know I must! Let me come in!'

She pushed herself into his arms, and Cuthbert left them, himself overcome, silenced, unable to know what he felt, till, after a brief interval, he heard Guy run upstairs, and Florella came out to him into the larger library into which he had gone.

She was pale, with shining eyes.

'It is all right,' she said.

'Florella,' said Cuthbert, humbly, 'it is all beyond me. But do you feel this—this presence? What do you believe? Surely not that those poor souls return to haunt him? Or that an actual fiend——? He says himself that the idea of a person may be just as much a delusion as the sight of one.'

'That may be so,' she answered, quietly. 'I can't divide soul and spirit. There is *something!* I want to join forces with him against it. I can. I don't think I can limit or explain what is meant by a fiend or a soul either. He is going to take me back to Kirkton now. I'm so glad,' she added, after a little pause, 'that he is not angry with me for coming.'

'I don't think there are any limits,' said Cuthbert, rather incoherently. 'Everything is possible since you are here and—are *you.*'

The housekeeper here presented coffee, Florella went to put her things on, and when she came back, while the dog-cart, in which Guy meant to drive her, was being brought round, administered it to the two men with as careful a regard to their physical comfort, as if the foregoing scene had never shaken her composure or strained her powers.

Guy did as he was bid, and Cuthbert would have liked to kiss the little warm gloves that lay by her side.

(To be continued.)

THROUGH PINK GLASSES.

I WILL confess that 'The Vintage' does not seem to me a very enthralling narrative. Mr. Benson's previous successes have all been in the flippant style, strongly flavoured with personalities. Since the publication of 'Dodo' he has made many attempts to conquer higher fields; but in each case he has merely succeeded in surprising—and perhaps annoying—his old clients. This shows clearly enough the difficulty of acquiring a reputation for seriousness after condescending to amuse. Liston, I fancy, would gladly have persuaded the world that he was a tragic actor; but theatre-goers had seen him flourishing Paul Pry's umbrella, and refused to be persuaded that he could act 'Hamlet' or 'Macbeth.' It is much the same with Mr. E. F. Benson. But he is a determined man, and he goes on trying to obtain a revision of the popular verdict. It was, perhaps, in a moment of weakness that he consented to publish 'The Babe, B.A.,' or it may be that he was seized with a longing to taste once more the sweets of success. At any rate, he has now 'rewarded resolution' with 'The Vintage.' It is written seriously, even earnestly—so seriously as to be sometimes a little tedious.

* * * * *

The fact is, Mr. Benson knows his subject remarkably well. I believe he was for some time a student at Athens, and he has made good use of his opportunities. I would not for a moment suggest that a writer of a historical novel should not make sure of his ground, but it is possible for him to make his knowledge oppressive to the reader. One may have something too much of local colour. And yet there is nothing of the guide-book about Mr. Benson's work—we are conscious throughout that he is utilising the results of his own observation. The only objection is, that this material is used too freely. It would almost seem that the author had determined to tell us everything he knew—architecture, geography, local manners and customs, they

must all be passed through Mr. Benson's wine-press. Consequently, these matters usurp too large a proportion of space; they get in front of the story, and tend to obscure the living interest. The result is not so much a novel as a series of studies in the Peloponnese.

* * * * *

The wave of historical romance has caught, among others, the accomplished author of 'The Prisoner of Zenda.' 'Simon Dale' is the title of Mr. Anthony Hope's latest work, and Simon Dale is at once the hero and the narrator of the story. This seems to be the usual course of proceeding in the modern historical novel. Somehow, one would have expected original treatment from the creator of the kingdom of Ruritania, but Mr. Hope has contented himself with the old methods. Possibly, with his first essay in this sort of writing, he esteemed it wiser to try no new experiments. The consequence is, that his book reads surprisingly like one of Mr. Weyman's; it is almost as though Mr. Hope had set himself consciously to produce an exercise in the manner of that writer. I do not mean to say that 'Simon Dale' is, in any sense of the word, a parody. It is quite remarkably well done, and, if we have a hero and heroine of the customary type, no one can deny that they are made sufficiently interesting.

* * * * * *

There is no writer living who can match Mr. Hope in the use of dialogue. It was by a series of studies in dialogue that he first won fame, and in this his latest novel he evinces all the old mastery over repartee. Perhaps it was for this reason that he chose the days of the so-called 'merry monarch' for his historical experiment. It was an age of wit, and surely Mr. Anthony Hope is the fit chronicler of the doings and sayings of Rochester, and Buckingham, and the rest. Simon himself, though country-bred (in accordance with inexorable custom, for your hero of historical romance must needs contrast his fresh country morals with the vices of town and court), is not long before he acquires a more than considerable dexterity in verbal fence. Indeed, he makes an admirable hero, does this young gentleman, and steers his way through the difficultest channels with never-failing gallantry and decorum. I can recall no hero in modern fiction who developes into the full wisdom of manhood with so startling a rapidity.

I think the general impression will be favourable to 'Simon Dale.' For a first attempt in historical fiction, it seems to me to be singularly free from fault. It is difficult to pick out any serious blemishes in the book. I have heard it objected that the whole scene of the escape from the king's ship on the way to Calais is forced and unnatural. It may be so—on serious reflection a week or so after reading objections of this sort are apt to obtrude themselves—but at the time we are carried safely over all difficulties by the spirit of narration. They do not interfere in the least with the reader's enjoyment. And that, in a novel designed merely to amuse, is the main thing. 'Simon Dale' makes no pretence of being a great work; it seems to have been written frankly as an exercise, much in the same way as one might produce a copy of Latin verses, in accordance with the rules and with a distinct flavour of the model set before the writer. None the less, it is as light and interesting a story as need be. It would not be easy for Mr. Hope to be dull. Yet I own that I am not quite satisfied with his treatment of Nell Gwyn—except in certain passages.

* * * * * *

Here is yet another recruit to the rapidly increasing army whose leader (at present) is Mr. Stanley Weyman. 'For the Religion,' by Hamilton Drummond, deals with Coligny and his attempt to save the Huguenots; the hero was one of the band who essayed the crossing to Florida. In spite of a certain prolixity at the commencement—not an uncommon fault in the historical romance—Mr. Drummond tells his story with considerable spirit. Blaise de Bernauld, whom he has chosen for his mouthpiece, is a gentleman of some eighty years, but he shows himself capable of holding our attention better than most of his younger competitors. Indeed, the book is so good a specimen of its class, that I could wish Mr. Drummond had chosen for it a better title. 'For the Religion' does not look, at first sight, like a novel of adventure; and it is possible, in the rush of new fiction, that this book may be overlooked by the class of readers for whom it was intended. Perhaps another class may buy it—and be somewhat surprised.

* * * * * *

Last of all, here is Mr. Bram Stoker adventuring in strange fields (to him) with 'Miss Betty,' a story of London life in the early Georgian period. It makes quiet reading after 'Dracula.'

No doubt Mr. Stoker felt that he, and his readers, required a rest; and he has restrained his imagination accordingly within the soberest limits. There is not much plot in his little story, and there is little attempt at characterisation. Still, it makes pleasant reading enough, for a railway journey. Mr. Stokes seems to have mastered the art of story-telling; and, give him the slightest chance, will spin you a creditable tale out of very slender materials. There is just a touch of pathos in certain passages; here and there a (very slight) suspicion of humour. The ingredients are mingled *secundum artem*, and we have—a book. It is very short, and very slight; a few years ago it could hardly have appeared in this form. But I fancy I have adverted before to the diminution in length of the modern novel.

* * * * * *

I am ashamed to speak at any length on another historical novel, so I will be satisfied with mentioning that in 'Shrewsbury' Mr. Stanley Weyman tries the rather hazardous experiment of choosing for his mouthpiece a man with scarcely a redeeming point in his character. And I have left myself no space in which I can do justice to such books as Mr. Henley's collected 'Poems,' or Mr. Alfred Austin's 'Songs of England.' Poetry must wait for awhile. But I imagine it will be some months before I bring myself to tackle another historical novel.

E. H. Lacon Watson.

FROM MY ATTIC WINDOW.

Canvassing—a new Pastime.

THE lady canvasser has become an institution, but I question whether the canvassing or the lady is benefiting. Canvassing is, every one admits, a regrettable necessity at best. And any one who would have the courage to abolish it would be a person beloved of canvassers and canvassed. It helps only the merest fraction of voters to make up their minds as to which side they will vote. The ordinary Englishman is a self-contained, unloquacious animal when he is a unit and tackled alone, who may or may not tell a canvasser, especially a lady, his real views. But the whole system by which women, and especially charming women, are induced to go round to his house to help him discover his real views is, in my opinion, degrading to him and to them. The real point of a lady canvassing is at bottom a trading on either the chivalry of a man which makes him loth to refuse a woman's request, or on his weakness which makes it impossible to say 'no' to a pretty woman to her face, whatever his real opinions may be. If the lady canvassing is the wife or the sister or the mother of the candidate, I can find it in my heart to look leniently on their visitations. If a great enthusiasm for the cause combined with a definite knowledge of the opposing questions (these two are by no means always allied) has sent them into the field, I can almost justify them, and even applaud. But the great majority of the ladies sent out in flocks, say, for example, at the last London County Council Election, have neither of these two reasons for intruding themselves into the homes of the electors.

The story told by Sir Algernon West, one of the candidates on that occasion, may be apocryphal, but it may equally well be true. He said, 'I had an offer of help the other day from a lady, and when I asked if she knew anything about the subject, she replied, "Oh yes; I was canvassing for the Moderates all last week, and now I thought I would give the Progressives a turn."' It is a comic story, but it points my tragic moral,

which is, that girls, and women too, take a week's canvassing as they would take a week's holiday, just for fun, or because they want to oblige, or to gain social distinction from being associated with somebody with a name. It is all a farce; and rather a shabby farce. These girls take no trouble to discover or think out the questions at issue. That they belong to one side more than another is due usually to accident or personal relationship; they bring discredit on the god 'public opinion' and on their own sex.

* * * * * *

A Prosecutor for the Crown. We have no lady barristers yet, but the new principal lady inspector of factories was a very able substitute in a case in which she was the prosecutor for the Crown. The case itself was interesting as illustrating how a big firm did what they thought a little wrong to do a great right. Only, unfortunately for them, the magistrate thought they had reversed the order and had done a great wrong to English law to do a little right for their customers. Miss Anderson opened the case herself, and explained that at Messrs. Jays (Limited) she had found sixteen work-girls at work on a Saturday afternoon at a quarter-past five, although the hour for closing on Saturdays was four. The defence made by the defendants' counsel showed that the firm were in a decided difficulty. They had an order for thirteen dresses to be worn by an actress on the Saturday evening; and on the Saturday at twelve o'clock another actress was substituted for the one for whom two of the dresses were fitted. Consequently there was consternation in the workroom of Messrs. Jays, for the dresses had to be ready at all costs, for the play could not proceed without them, and the firm would be liable if the performance did not take place. The only way out was to break the Factory Acts, and keep the work-girls beyond proper hours; but Miss Anderson found them at it, which was fatal. And the magistrate said that the forewoman in her evidence seemed to think that the Factory Acts were as nothing compared with theatrical interests. 'I am here,' he said, 'to enforce a different view.' And he enforced it by the utmost penalty allowed by the law. Miss Anderson had carried her case triumphantly. Indeed, it is worth noting as a point in favour of our poor, inexact, wildly imaginative sex, that in one year the Women Inspectors of Factories instituted proceedings in almost three hundred cases, and only lost two of them.

The Claims of Slang. There was a time, well within the memory of living man, when slang was practically an unknown element in any writing that aspired to be called literature, or in any speech that aspired to be thought elegant. Imagine the demure heroines of Jane Austen, or the charming and innocent young things who dwelt in Cranford, alluding to their friends as 'awfully jolly,' that commonest and weakest phrase in the slang dictionary, and the last resort of the poverty-stricken vocabulary. But now, consciously or unconsciously, words, which in the beginning were made in America, have crept into the daily speech of the most refined of English gentlewomen. And phrases which we adopted for temporary use, because of their incisive and idiomatic force, have remained on as if native born into the family. And, perhaps, there was a service which these pioneers of slang had to render us. Probably our phrases were too suave and stiff in form. Possibly we needed a little infusion of the pointed, the incisive, and the picturesque, and the swift metaphor which makes the phrase alive. For that, in essence, is what the best of slang is—the abstract idiom suggested by the concrete object.

I did not set out to deliver my soul on slang, but to point out that a literary American paper, *Current Literature*, concludes an argument concerning the English language by asserting that 'slang has too long been disfranchised by linguistic snobs: it should be welcomed into the democracy of speech.' Of course there is slang and slang; in fact, that assertion might safely be put into the plural. There is the slang of the London gamin, which needs translating into English before it can be understood. There is the slang of Rudyard Kipling's Tommy Atkins, and there is the slang of the Yankee speculator. The varieties of slang are as many as the occupations of men and also women, and are really different languages. These tongues, some of them coming perilously near the profane, I presume, we are not invited to welcome into our speech. But for some, the slang which we call Americanisms and catch from the writings of our educated transatlantic cousins—strong vivid phrases which light up the meaning with a search light—we have made room, and we might, with advantage to ourselves, make room for a few more. It must always, however, remain in the democracy of speech. Into the aristocracy of speech—which does not mean the speech of aristocrats, by the way—it will take long years or a revolution to introduce it.

These things I write for the understanding of the wise and prudent, and not as a justification for the idle or vulgar who use common slang to save themselves the labour of learning their own mother tongue.

* * * * * *

Chances for Life. Canon Body holds strong and somewhat advanced views on the mission of women, and he has the courage of his convictions. He was speaking in Durham in connection with his mission work chiefly among colliers. After reviewing the work done by the steady force of the ladies' efforts, he said, 'More workers we want, and more workers we must have. It is absolutely pitiable to look around and come face to face with the unemployed women, the women in wealthy homes with nothing to do. Parents ought to educate their daughters to some end. Marriage is not the only prospect open. Here is a life in this work open, a magnificent life of influence, a life as noble and satisfying as home life, and the Church must make her demands and have them supplied.' If the Church often spoke out so decidedly in words of such sterling common sense, there would be more hope of women volunteering for real hard life work where it is wanted.

* * * * * *

A Spectacled Nation. Are we waking up at last to the way we and most other so-called educated nations are destroying that which we can never remake—eyesight. We are fast becoming a spectacled nation, not only when we are crowned with hoary heads, but when we have barely emerged from our cradles. Surely the spirit of the age, or the *fin de siècle* cannot have got into our eyes? It is answerable for a good deal, I know. But, in the mean time, until we have settled to what large and general cause we must attribute the fact that only 39·15 per cent. of children in London under fifteen have thoroughly normal eyesight, we may listen to Mr. Brudenell Carter who has been delivering an address on the subject to the Society of Arts. He is distressed, and I think we may be distressed with him, that parents have so vague an idea of what a child ought to be able to see, or what sized letters he ought to be able to read at a given distance. Schools, and especially elementary schools, are great sinners in the matter. The fine sewing required is an optical iniquity, and the darning is a sin. And the pity of it is that both the very fine sewing and darning are practically useless for practical life. Then the Bibles in common use in

the elementary schools, are, most of them, far too small for any child, or indeed any one, to read. The eyes may do the heavy work we set them at the time, but they take their revenge afterwards. Those in authority in the schools in the country may be able to remedy these things, while London is getting its huge machinery to work. If they can, the next generation will call them, or ought to call them, blessed.

* * * * * *

Irish Home Work.

How much more the happiness and well-being of a country depends upon little things than we often remember! And how much women can do, and are doing to promote this well-being! There is Ireland, as an example. A few years ago the peasant women had no industry whereby they could make money. Nothing to do—except gossip, of course—after they had done their bit of tidying to the cabin and the children; and that bit was not a very large bit. Consequently, Satan found a vast amount, and varied kinds of mischief for their idle hands to do. But here and there over the country—here in convent, there in a parish and elsewhere over a whole county—industries and useful and paying work have been taught and learnt. Lace, for which the country was once so famous, is being made once more with benefit to the workers and the buyers. Embroideries and sewing, knitting and crochet, are among the things the peasants have learnt to do with the skill which Irishwomen have. Ladies who wished the country well have done this thing, and will do it again. No one thinks of calling them the saviours of their country, which in effect, and to a degree, they are.

ANNIE GROSER HURD.

The China Cupboard.

ARRANGED BY CHELSEA CHINA.

(*For the regulations of all 'Monthly Packet' Competitions, see p.* 480.)

FIRST SHELF.

MISS CHARLOTTE YONGE.

This appeal needs no endorsement in these pages, which owe to Miss Charlotte Yonge their very existence. We should have liked to be the *first* to have called attention to it, before the rest of the press were invited to give it publicity. But it was not thought well that this should be. Nevertheless we must feel that we have the right beyond all others to ask and to get; and on behalf of both editors I beg that all our readers and contributors will answer to the appeal. For we are a part of the 'influence' of which it speaks, and have done a large share in spreading it.

CHRISTABEL COLERIDGE.

'SIR,—It has been suggested that, in recognition of Miss Yonge's great services as pioneer of that religious and high-toned literature for young people which for the last fifty years has been a special glory of England, and the admiration of America and other countries, a University Scholarship, bearing her name, should be founded at the Winchester High School, which receives girls from all parts of the kingdom.

'The author of "The Heir of Redclyffe" has been connected with this school from its foundation in 1884 as one of the council of management, and there is no place outside her own village of Otterbourne more linked with her name than the ancient city of Winchester.

'The sum of £6000 will be required in order to found an Annual Scholarship of £50 to be held for three years, and the names of all the subscribers will be presented to Miss Yonge when the requisite sum is raised.

'Among the many who have already given their cordial approval of the scheme may be mentioned—

Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales,

His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Northbrook, Sir Walter Besant, the Bishop of Winchester, the Dean of Durham, the Master of Trinity, the Duchess of Sutherland, the Dow. Marchioness of Hertford, and the Principals of the Women's Colleges, Oxford and Cambridge.

'Donations, either large or small, may be paid to the "Charlotte Yonge Scholarship" Fund; at the London and County Bank, Winchester (or at any branch of this bank); or to the Hon. Treasurer, the Rev. J. M. Merriott, Dormy Cottage, Winchester.—I remain, yours, etc.,

'ESMÉ STUART (*Hon. Sec.*).

'Witham Close,
'Winchester.'

VARIETY SUBJECT FOR FEBRUARY.

Six Quotations on Sea-birds.

We have endless quotations on the sea-birds, and of course selection is difficult. On the whole, our old correspondent *Doronicum* seems to have sent the most unhackneyed and varied list, and the prize is assigned to her. *Dagonette*, *Winifred Spurling*, *Winifred Adey*, *Pixie*, and many others have sent excellent lists. *Lindum* sends us good *prose* pieces, and we add *Scotland Yard*'s for variety. We must not forget Keble's beautiful reference to the sea gull—

'As though life's only call and care
Was graceful motion.'

From THE STORMY PETREL.

'Up and down! up and down!
From the base of the wave to the billow's crown,
And amidst the flashing and feathery foam
The stormy petrel finds a home—
A home, if such a place may be,
For her who lives on the wide, wide sea,
On the craggy ice, in the frozen air,
And seeketh only her rocky lair
To warm her young, and to teach them spring
At once o'er the wave on their stormy wing.'

BRYAN WALLER PROCTER.

'PATER VESTER PASCIT ILLA.'

'Our bark is on the waters! wide around
The wandering wave; above, the lovely sky:
Hush! a young sea-bird floats, and that quick cry
Shrieks to the levelled weapon's echoing sound;
Grasp its lank wing, and on, with reckless bound!
Yet, creature of the surf, a sheltering breast
To-night shall haunt in vain thy far-off nest,
A call unanswered search the rocky ground.'

THE REV. ROBERT STEPHEN HAWKER.

TO A SEA-BIRD.

'Sauntering hither on listless wings,
Careless vagabond of the sea;
Little thou heedest the surf that sings,
The bar that thunders, the shale that rings,—
Give me to keep thy company.

Lazily rocking on ocean's breast,
Something in common, old friend, have we;
Thou on the shingle seek'st thy nest.
I to the waters look for rest,—
I on the shore and thou on the sea.'

BRET HARTE.

THE SEA-DIVER.

'My way is on the bright blue sea,
My sleep upon the rocky tide;
And many an eye has followed me,
Where billows clasp the worn seaside.

'My plumage bears the crimson blush
When ocean by the sun is kissed!
When fades the evening's purple flush,
My dark wing cleaves the silver mist.'

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

From THE DOOM OF KING ACRISIUS.

'Now underneath the scarped cliffs of the bay
From horn to horn a belt of sand there lay,
Fast lessening as the flood-tide swallowed it,
There all about did the sea-swallows flit.
And from the black rocks yellow hawks flew down.
And cormorants fished amidst the sea-weed brown,
Or on the low rocks nigh into the sea,
While over all the fresh wind merrily
Blew from the sea.'

WILLIAM MORRIS.

BALLAD OF PENTYRE TOWN (CORNISH).

'Foam flies white over rocks of black,
Nights are dark when the boats go down,
But souls flit back in the wild wind's track,
And grey gulls gather in Pentyre Town.

'Wild gray gulls in the narrow street,
Wheeling, wavering, to and fro
(Dear the echo of banished feet!),
Flocking in as the sun sinks low.

'One comes sailing with outstretched beak,
White throat lifted in wailing cry,
Stoops his wing to a woman's cheek,
Swift and light, as he wavers by.

'Foam flies white over rocks of black,
Nights are dark when the boats go down,
But souls flit back in the wild wind's track,
And gray gulls gather in Pentyre Town.'

GRAHAM R. TOMSON.
DORONICUM.

THE WATER BABIES.

'The birds began to gather at Allfowlsness in thousands and tens of thousands, blackening all the air; swans and brant geese, harlequins and eiders, harelds and garganeys, smews and goosanders, divers and loons, grebes and dovekies, auks and razorbills, gannets and petrels, skuas and terns, with gulls beyond all naming or numbering; and they paddled and washed and splashed and combed and brushed themselves on the sand, till the shore was white with feathers; and they quacked and clucked and gabbled and chattered and screamed and whooped as they talked over matters with their friends, and settled where they were to go and breed that summer, till you might have heard them ten miles off.'—KINGSLEY.

BEHOLD THE HOUR.

'Along the solitary shore,
While flitting sea-fowl round me cry.'

BURNS.

THE HIGH TIDE.

'The flights of mews and peewits pied
By millions crouched on the old sea wall.'

JEAN INGELOW.

TO A SEA-GULL.

'White bird of the tempest! O beautiful thing,
With the bosom of snow, and the motionless wing,
Now sweeping the billow, now floating on high,
Now bathing thy plumes in the light of the sky;
Now poising o'er ocean thy delicate form,
Now breasting the surge with thy bosom so warm;
Now darting aloft, with a heavenly scorn,
Now shooting along, like a ray of the morn;
Now lost in the folds of the cloud-curtained dome,
Now floating abroad like a flake of the foam;
Now silently poised o'er the war of the main,
Like the Spirit of Charity brooding o'er pain;
Now gliding with pinion all silently furled,
Like an angel descending to comfort the world.'

GERALD GRIFFIN.

HIAWATHA'S FISHING.

'Then he heard a clang and flapping,
As of many wings assembling,
Heard a screaming and confusion,
As of birds of prey contending,
Saw a gleam of light above him,
Shining through the ribs of Nahma,
Saw the glittering eyes of sea-gulls,
Of Kayoshk, the sea-gulls, peering.

. . . . .

And the wild and clamorous sea-gulls
Toiled with beak and claws together,
Made the rifts and openings wider,
In the mighty ribs of Nahma.'

LONGFELLOW.

DEAR CHELSEA CHINA,—Last summer in Cornwall I slept for a month in a bedroom at the top of a house, on the side of a cliff, and from it I could see nothing but sky and sea. I had my window open and no blind, and in the morning two sea-gulls used to come and eat the fruit (grapes or apples) that I put out for them over-night on a stone parapet outside. Their cry always sounds to me like a laugh of joy more than a wail.—WINIFRED SPURLING.

NOTE.—In a suburban back garden at four in the morning, it has been thought to resemble that of a miserable puppy, combined with an excited peacock.—CHELSEA CHINA.

PRIZE WINNER FOR FEBRUARY.

Miss May Seymour, 8, Radford Street, Coventry.

SUBJECT FOR APRIL.

What sort of a place would you like to live in, and why?

SECOND SHELF.

PROSE COMPOSITION FOR FEBRUARY.

A MOUNTAIN.

Some very good papers have been sent in on the mountains. Some have erred in describing their tour, or their own feelings, rather than the mountain itself, and by no means all have grasped that what was wanted was the individual personality that each giant has. There is a beautiful little

essay by Vernon Lee called, 'The Lie of the Land,' which is well worth reading in this connection. A mountain is a presence, agreeable or otherwise, and you cannot forget it when you have once felt it 'a-calling.' Even the little hills have their own varying voices. 'What is a mountain?' was asked of a little suburban schoolboy. ''Arrer 'Ill,' he replied promptly; and even Harrow Hill, standing among its green fields and waving hedgerows, adds its soft whisper to the universal chorus. It is a great thing to make the acquaintance of a mountain, even if you find yourself unworthy of his intimate friendship.

Thorshaven takes the prize. *Winifred Spurling* and *Daughter of the Soil*, excellent. *Miranda*, *Truda*, *Medora*, and *Holly Leaf* also send excellent papers.

MOUNTAIN CHARACTER—A CONTRAST.

'I to the hills will lift mine eyes,
From whence doth come mine aid.'

So reads the minister; the precentor begins his harsh and powerful rendering of 'French;' the shrill congregational voices falling in by twos and threes during the second line. And to the hills I too lift up mine eyes, and look from the gallery across through the small diamond panes to the softly undulating blue line in the shimmering summer haze. A very small child then, I thought somewhere there lay a secret of peace, and though many a year has come and gone, I am inclined to think so still.

Comes a voice in my ear as I fall into dreams of those Sundays long ago, 'Are you going to write about your Galloway hills? That really is the infatuation of a native. They have no beauty of form—shapeless, uninteresting masses.'

'No beauty of form,' I interrupt indignantly; 'you need a course of Ruskin on the subtle moulding of curves! Uninteresting! You had better learn what geologists can see there with regard to the mighty planing of the ice-sheet; or suppose you betake yourself to Wordsworth to have proved to you that there is no mountain scenery without its own glory and beauty, when you study it the intenser way in which a lover looks at his mistress.'

'All very well,' is the reply, 'but for outsiders would it not be more thrilling if you gave, say, an account of Pike's Peak in Colorado, or——'

'Do you observe,' I rejoin, 'that the subject given is the *character* of a mountain? Do you suppose I mastered Pike's Peak in the single day spent there? I think I can imagine something of his feelings—that it may be he regrets the vanishing of the "lodge pole trail" on his lower slopes, the silent passing to and fro of the heavy laden Indian squaw; that he hates the "pale-faces" who have come and "cut away his tallest pines, the tall dark pines that plumed the craggy ledge high over the blue gorge;" that, when flushed rose-red in the dawning, he looks over the vast ocean of the prairies, he thinks of the days when the great herds of buffaloes swept along them, and when not even on the far horizon could he see the tame chequer-work of the cornfields stealing onwards to his base; or it may be that, gazing westward, in the wilderness of jagged peaks that lie behind him, he feels he can afford to scorn the puny mortals who profane his solitudes with their toy railways, and set up their shanty stations on the heights where only the wolf and the eagle knew the path. They "have their day and cease to be," while he looks down on the great plain with his scented piney and rushing brooks, his granite precipices and flower-strewn slopes, his highest treeless height, bald, bare, storm-swept, overshadowing all, a realised vision of the Wild West, and all the glamour and mystery the name conveys.'

'Pretty well, as you're *not* going to write about Pike's Peak,' is the response; 'and what about your Galloway hill?'

What, indeed! How shall I describe its character? The long, softly curving line seen against a clear twilight sky with its power of hushing the

restless heart; 'To all its shiftings of sensuous life, bringing contrariousness in a great calm;' 'The strength of the everlasting hills,' the prevailing thought, never with the same intensity conveyed to me by shattered peak or beetling precipice in foreign lands; the sunny rapture of a summer's day by the burn among the hills, when the aromatic fragrance of the bog-myrtle is wafted on the breeze, and not a sound breaks the silence save the musical tinkling of the waters, the bees in the heather-bells, and the sweet wild whistle of the curlew. The character, the subtle charm to the native is hard to give, but let such an one in London street or foreign clime remember, and the passing thought will be set to the music of the old Jacobite rhyme—

'Sair, sair against my will did I bide sae lang awa',
And my heart was aye in Athol's green in Carlisle Ha'.'

THORSHAVEN.

CLASS LIST FOR FEBRUARY.

DISTINCTION.—*Winifred Spurling, Daughter of the Soil.*

CLASS I.

Miranda, Truda, Medora, Holly-Leaf, Lag-last, Pixie, Lindum, Pale Blue, Hexagon, Reis, Doronicum, Skena Vaw, Judy, Spectacles.

CLASS II.

Scotland Yard, Lilian, Topsy, Irene, Son of a Gun.

PRIZE WINNER FOR FEBRUARY.

Miss L. Copland, 14, Brunswick Gardens, Kensington.

SUBJECT FOR APRIL.

Fellow Travellers.

WHO, WHEN, AND WHERE?

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR FEBRUARY.

1. 'For a critic to say anything of *him* that has not been said already is as hard as it would be for a poet to sing a new song about the sun. But we vivify our old impressions by rearranging them; each reflects the light, flinging a gleam or a sparkle on its neighbour.' What critic wrote thus?

2. 'Kings for such a tomb, would wish to die.' What tomb?

3. Who said this?—

'All pains the immortal spirit must endure,
All weakness which impairs, all griefs which bow,
Find their sole speech in that victorious brow.'

4. In what does Carlyle say that our poet's greatness comes out most decisively?

5. 'Soul of the age!
The applause, delight, the wonder of our stage.
* * * * * *
He was not of an age, but for all time.'

Who wrote these lines to his memory?

6. Give the quotation (in poetry or prose) which you consider the best expression in a few words of the genius of our poet.

Answers to February Questions.

(*All about Shakspere.*)

1. Professor Edward Dowden. (See his 'Transcripts and Studies. 'Shakspere's Portraiture of Women.')

2. That of the minds and hearts of men. See Milton's 'Epitaph on the admirable dramatic poet, William Shakspere.'

3. Matthew Arnold, in his Sonnet on Shakspere.

4. 'It is in what I call portrait-painting, the delineating of men and things, especially of men, that Shakspere is great. All the greatness of the man comes out decisively here.' ('The Hero as Poet.' 'Lectures on Heroes and Hero Worship.' Thomas Carlyle.)

5. Ben Jonson. 'To the Memory of W. S.'

Ans. 1. Only one competitor has found the right answer, though another has discovered the author. His criticisms (of Shakspere and others) are delightful, and ought to be known to all students.

Ans. 2. Many competitors have not read Milton's Epitaph carefully enough to realise what the 'tomb' was.

Ans. 4. One or two competitors have given a quotation from Wilhelm Meister (Carlyle's Translation). As it partly fits, some marks are allowed.

Ans. 6. A large number of quotations are chosen (some certainly not in 'a few words'). The chief favourites are E. B. Browning's lines from 'A Vision of Poets'—

> 'Then Shakspere, on whose forehead climb
> The crowns o' the world. Oh eyes sublime,
> With tears and laughter for all time!'

and various excerpts from Coleridge's 'Lectures' and 'Table Tal *e.g.*—

'Self-sustained, deriving his genius immediately from heaven, independent of all earthly or national influence. That such a mind involved itself in a human form is a problem indeed. . . . My words are indeed feeble when I speak of that myriad-minded man, whom all artists feel above all praise . . . he was of all times and countries. He drew from the eternal of our nature.'

Only two competitors have made the mistake of thinking the question was to be answered out of Shakspere's own words. They are given half marks.

Marks for February.

50: *A. C. R.*, *All-Fours*, *Athena*, *Bog-Myrtle*, *Cymraes*, *Dianora*, *E. V. B.*, *F. R. D.*, *Holly-Leaf*, *Isabel*, *Lenore*, *Melton Mowbray*, *Proserphina*, *The Blue Cat*, *Thorshaven*, *W. Spurling*. 48: *Blue Wings*, *Double-Dummy*, *Trimmer*, *W. Adey*. 47: *Gruffanuff*, *Honeylands*, *Kittiwake*. 46: *Cobwebs*, *Hay*, *P. S. Millard*, *White Cat*. 45: *Akela*, *Aspley Guise*, *Irnham*, *Sea-Maiden*. 43: *Eleanor*, *Nevil*. 40: *Stonechat*. 37: *A. E. L.* 35: *Sintram*. 29: *Ellen Vannin*. 26: *E. T.* 24: *M. R. A.* 18: *Daisy*.

E.V.B.—See notice below.

W. Adey.—Marks for 'Plugson of Undershott' were deducted from all who were near the prize, thus equalising their chances.

Melton Mowbray.—You gave no allusion to Galileo, 'the Tuscan artist,' in 3 (3) of the Milton answers.

Notice.—Answers (to Search Questions only) to be sent by the 20th of each month to *Miss Pridham, Westmoreland Lodge, Wimbledon Park, Wimbledon.* 'Search Questions' to be written outside the envelope. All other competitions as usual.

Search Questions for April.

(Seasonable similes from old poets.)

1. Say what (*a*) the 'spring of love resembleth,' and (*b*) what men are like when they woo, and what when they wed.

2. 'Whan that —— with his showres sote
The droughte of March hath perced to the rote.'

Fill in the blank, and say where the lines are to be found.

3. 'Tell me, good Hobbinoll, what garres thee greete?
* * * * * *
Like —— shoure so stremes the trickling teares
Adowne thy cheeke, to quenche thy thristye payne.'

Where is this quotation?

4. '—— the sweet ——, is the year's pleasant king;
Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring;
Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing,
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo.'

From what song is this verse taken?

5. 'Now the golden morn aloft
Waves her dew-bespangled wing,
With vermeil cheek and whisper soft
She woes the tardy ——:
Till —— starts.'

What well-known poem begins thus?

6. Find another quotation that suits well with the above set.

THIRD SHELF.

Notes and Queries.

Queries.

Bath Robin would be grateful to any one who would kindly send her a copy of Rudyard Kipling's beautiful 'Recessional:' 'Lest we Forget.'—Address, Mrs. Pratt, 10, Belgrave Terrace, Camden Road, Bath.

Miss M. I. Talbot would be glad to send gratis to any readers of the 'Monthly Packet' stray numbers of the following magazines:—'Pearson's,' 'The Windsor,' 'The English Historical Review,' 'The Gospel Missionary,' 'Central Africa,' 'The Net,' 'The Mission Field,' 'The Economic Review,' and 'Commonweath.'—Address, Miss M. I. Talbot, 10, Great George Street, Westminster, S.W.

Miss Smith wishes to express her grateful thanks to *Undine* for so kindly sending her a copy of Roscoe's 'Butterfly's Ball.' She does not know the other poem mentioned by *Undine*, but would much like to see it, if it is not giving too much trouble.

Answers.

The chronological list of Miss Yonge's characters has been supplied in the March number 'by authority.'—Chelsea China.

Bath Robin.—'The Legend Beautiful,' by Longfellow, is in the complete edition of his poems, the cheap one. Any bookseller could supply it.—Chelsea China.

LINES BY FANNY KEMBLE.

'Life is before you! from the fated road
Ye cannot turn; then take ye up the load.
Not yours to tread, or leave the unknown way;
Ye *must* go o'er it, meet ye what ye may.
What tho' the brightness waste, the pleasures fade,
The glory dim? oh, not of these is made
The awful life that to your trust is given!
Children of God! inheritors of heaven!
Mourn not the perishing of each fair toy;
Ye were ordained to *do*, and not to *enjoy*.
Fail not for sorrow, falter not for sin,
But onwards, upwards, till the goal you win.
God guard you! and God guide you on your way,
Young warrior pilgrims, who set forth to-day!'

'I shall pass through the world but once. Any good thing therefore that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it *now*. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.'—From 'KINSFOLK AND OTHERS.'

Said to be an extract from 'Marcus Aurelius.'

The following old sayings may interest *Lambda*:—

If the grass grows in Janiveer,
It will grow no more that year.

February fill dyke, either black or white.

February borrows one week from April, and pays it back in May.

If March comes in like a lamb, it goes out like a lion.

April showers bring May flowers.

Plenty of rain in May makes plenty of corn and hay.

If the sun shines through the apple trees on Shrove Tuesday it will be a good apple year.

A dripping June puts all things in tune.

A cherry year, a merry year.

If you skate in November, you skate no more (that is, that winter).—*Southwell.*

CORRESPONDENCE.

DEAR MADAM,—In the January 'Monthly Packet' you mention ambulance work, and wonder how far it is kept up. I am one of the oldest secretaries; we had our first Women's 'First Aid' Class in 1879. Of that class very few are now living in Ipswich; but of those, two are still as enthusiastic, or more so, than in 1879. We started our centre in 1880, and since then have had numbers of classes. Many of the G.E.R. men were instructed by the help of *our* friends, etc., until the company took the work up, and did it well and thoroughly.

The School Board, for a time, had very large and satisfactory classes, both of men and women, but eventually gave them up on the score of expense. But classes still go on, and the interest in them does not fail. Men keep up the work better than women, perhaps because they are more likely to be of use in accidents. There are many men working well here, civilians and police, and we know that lives have been saved and pain alleviated.

We are just now building two new litters for use in the town, for use in accident cases, and also for removing helpless patients, or people to the hospital.

The women also keep up their knowledge by attending monthly lectures and practices, and both men and women from time to time go through the whole course again.

In my long experience I have had many interesting letters from people, showing of what use the classes have been to them in nursing their dear ones or themselves. One girl, who had an operation, and a trained nurse, and who was not well off, as soon as possible parted with her nurse, and, as she wrote me, 'nursed herself;' that is, she trained her mother and sisters by what she herself knew.

Some of my ladies have saved life, as in a case of burning, and, I believe, we have often been able to do good work in insisting on the obtaining of medical aid, because we knew certain symptoms were serious.

We have had a great deal of ridicule, even now it goes on, but I don't think it has ever stopped the work; perhaps, in the end, it has strengthened it.

I think I may say we are a most happy and united centre. Our medical staff increases, and all our doctors are most kind to us; our subscribers increase—we have never lost one, but through death (of course we should like more); our members increase. We ought to have done more; but we have had many difficulties to contend with. But I am quite sure the work has been blessed, and so has prospered; and every now and then there comes a fresh wave of enthusiasm among some of the older members, which helps us much.

I beg to enclose our last report.—Yours faithfully, MARY C. COULCHER, Local Hon. Secretary St. John's Ambulance Association, and Honorary Associate of the Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem in England.

DEAR MADAM,—I am desirous to find some ladies who would be willing to do a little church embroidery for the Chapel of the Society of the Sacred Mission, Mildenhall. I think there must be some readers of your magazine who would help us if they knew of our need. Our work is very simple, and we would be willing to find the cost of the materials and postage when necessary. For a great deal of our work, indeed, we have the materials already, and they will only require making up. Might I ask those in a position to undertake such work to write at once to Miss Eva Jameson, 9, Ladbrooke Square, London, W., who will gladly supply particulars of both our requirements and about the work of the Society in general?—HERBERT KELBY.

ON THE COMPARISON OF CHARLES I. AND LOUIS XVI.

As criticism has been invited by Chelsea China, I venture to offer a few remarks on Bluebell's estimate of Charles I.'s character. In the first place, I, for one, could have wished she had cited some facts and authorities in support of her assertions. That 'no being vied so successfully with the pompous display of the Tudor sovereigns,' is not a very intelligible sentence as it stands. Then she tells us that 'he was almost mediæval in his honest religious professions, and false words and actions.' Surely the facts of 1648 disprove this! There was then a possibility of his coming to terms with his adversaries. The king was ready to make concessions; he even consented to give up the command of the army for twenty years; but he was firm in refusing to entertain one of their propositions, namely, that the Presbyterian clergy should be permanently established in the kingdom. As he was firm in this refusal to the last, he cannot with justice be called false, where his religion is concerned.—C.N.K.

DEAR CHELSEA CHINA,—In Miss March-Phillipps' very interesting paper on 'Women's Public Work' in the January number, page 24, three lines from the bottom, there is a statement which, I think, you ought not to leave uncorrected. She says a parish is so 'called from *paroika*, the dwelling of a priest.' The derivation is, without doubt, παροικία, Latin *paræcia*, used by Augustine as an ecclesiastical district.—I am, yours faithfully, H. H. MINCHIN.

DEAR CHELSEA CHINA,—I do not know whom I have to thank for the copy of 'The Knight of Intercession,' received to-day, and perhaps I ought to write to the lady (Miss Ellacombe), whose address is on the envelope. But, being uncertain, will you allow me to express my thanks, wherever due, through the 'China Cupboard'? I am very much obliged to the kind and unknown copier of the poem, which I had no idea was such a long one. It is one I have much wished to read.—Yours truly, E. F. MACFIE ('Norna').

Will *Nora Kilworth*, and the authors of 'An Italian Hospital,' 'The Paston Letters,' and 'Drama among the Basques,' kindly send their addresses, which have been unfortunately mislaid, to the Editor.

SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.

CENTRAL AFRICA: THE UNIVERSITIES' MISSION.

QUESTIONS FOR APRIL.

13. Show the position Livingstone held with regard to Afri can missions.

14. Give the succession of the bishops of the 'Universities' Mission,' with dates of consecration, half a dozen lines about each, and a life of one.

15. What were the reasons for the change from the Zambesi to Zanzibar, and has the change been justified?

16. Short accounts of mission work at the following stations—Magila, Masasi, Kiungani, Lake Nyassa.

Books recommended:—*The History of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa* (3*s.* 10*d.*); *Livingstone*, by T. Hughes (2*s.* 9*d.*); *A Visit to Africa in* 1896, by R. Webb (7*d.*); *Mission Heroes—Bishop Mackenzie, Bishop Steere, Bishop Smythies* (1½*d.* each). All the above can be had from the office of U.M.C.A., 9, Dartmouth Street, Westminster, S.W. Prices include postage. *Africa Waiting*, by Thornton (2*s.* 6*d.*); *Chauncy Maples* (7*s.* 6*d.*), Longmans.

Answers to be sent to Bog-oak, Industrial School, Andover, by May 1st.

Subscription from *Veritas* should have been acknowledged last time.

CLASS LIST FOR JANUARY.

CLASS I.

M.P., 40; *Ierne*, 35; *Maiden Aunt*, 33; *Veritas*, 32; *Klondyke*, 31.

CLASS II.

Honeysuckle, 29; *Musidora*, 18.

REMARKS.

1. By 1721 the S.P.G. was at work in most of the twelve colonies afterwards known as the United States; in Newfoundland (temporarily withdrawn), and in the Windward Isles. First meeting of S.P.C.K., March, 1699, New Style, *i.e.* 1698, Old Style; but decidedly 199 years ago.

2. Lebombo constituted a diocese, 1891; first bishop consecrated, 1893. Among other bad things *found* by Bishop Gray, the translation of the Creed used in our Dutch services had *algemeene Christelijke Kerk* (Universal Christian Church). He altered it to *Heilige Katholijke Kerk*. Right order of dioceses: 1, Capetown; 2, Graham's Town; 3, Natal; 4, St. Helena; 5, Bloemfontein; 6, Zululand; 7, St. John's, Kaffraria; 8, Pretoria; 9, Mashonaland; 10, Lebombo.

3. *Musidora.*—Napoleon I. died 1821, so Bishop Gray could hardly preach before him in 1849.

4. State of things *left* by Bishop Gray should include: (*a*) All the heathen in his diocese brought within possible reach of Christianity; (*b*) Diocesan

Synods (begun 1857), Provincial Synods fully constituted, 1870; (*c*) The Missionary Community of St. George's Home, working (1) a Refuge for Penitents, (2) St. Michael's Home for Wrecklings (boys and girls), (3) St. Cyprian's, a diocesan school for young ladies—besides all forms of parochial and mission work. There was also a separate orphanage for white children under Miss Arthur, the Diocesan College, and the Kaffir College.

Nearly all the papers are good.

'MONTHLY PACKET' NOTICES.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The readers of the 'Monthly Packet' are invited to address CHELSEA CHINA on any subject the discussion of which occurs to them as likely to interest others, especially in connection with articles appearing in the Magazine.

CHINA CUPBOARD PRIZES—

A. *Variety Specimens.* Prize, monthly, 5*s*.

***Search Questions* (*Who, When, and Where*). Prize, for six months taken together, £1 1*s*.**

***Prose Competition.* Monthly Prize, 5*s*., or 10*s*., according to merit.**

RULES for the above—

(1) Papers must be sent by the 25th of each month, addressed to CHELSEA CHINA, care of Messrs. A. D. Innes & Co., Limited; they must NOT be addressed to 'the Editors.' (2) Each envelope must be marked *outside* with the subject to which it refers. Papers under separate competitions or discussions must be in separate envelopes. (3) The correspondent's name and address must be written on every paper: the use of a *nom de plume* for the lists is optional. (4) If competitors fail to comply with any rule, their papers will be disqualified. (5) The real name of the prize-winner is published in each case. (6) There are no entrance fees. (7) Prizes cannot be taken by the same person twice in a half-year.

PROVERB COMPETITION, 1898.

It appears to us that a set subject fails to attract authors of experience, or to elicit their best work. We therefore cordially invite stories for next year's Christmas Number to be sent in without limit of subject, to be chosen according to merit and paid for in the usual manner. The PROVERB COMPETITION is limited to authors under 25.

All stories not to exceed 10,000 words, to be sent in between June 1st and July 1st, 1898. Proverb stories to be headed PROVERB COMPETITION, CHRISTMAS NUMBER, outside the wrapper, other stories CHRISTMAS NUMBER only. Stamped cover or stamps to be enclosed for return.

Illustrate this quotation in a story—

> 'Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
> The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
> Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
> And, by opposing, end them.'

[The Editors of the 'Monthly Packet' will feel obliged if All Contributors will write their names and addresses clearly on their MSS., and will enclose stamps for return. Unless these conditions are complied with, the Editors cannot undertake to preserve, return, or enter into correspondence about MSS. Much trouble is saved if accompanying letters are enclosed in the parcel instead of being sent separately.

The utmost care is taken in returning MSS., but the Editors can only hold themselves absolutely responsible for such as are sent to them at their own request.]

THE MONTHLY PACKET.

NEW SERIES.

MAY 1898.

THE GOSPEL WRIT IN STEEL.

BY ARTHUR PATERSON, AUTHOR OF 'FATHER AND SON,' 'FOR FREEDOM'S SAKE,' ETC.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE winter of 1863, the hardest winter the American people had ever known. The war still raged, and though the defeat of Lee at Gettysburg in the preceding June, and the fall of Vicksburg, which secured the free passage of the Mississippi for the Union States, had given the Confederate cause a check which many of their best men considered irreparable, they still fought on stubbornly, and the end was not yet.

The cold this year was unusually severe—an additional hardship, the winter beginning early and lasting long. Mrs. Selby was sinking fast. The progress of the disease had been extremely slow, thanks to the strength of her constitution and the unremitting care and attention of her daughter, and her friends. But when the frosts began in earnest she drooped quickly, and knew she would not live to see another New Year's day. Yet she was happy and at peace in spite of the pain she suffered. She no longer feared for the future of her family. Jean, after many hard struggles and failures and discouragements without end, had trained herself to be an expert housewife and a devoted nurse. She had not stood alone in her trial; but no one, except Mrs. Burletson and John, knew the constant self-denial, the infinite patience, which had been required of her through the weary months since the summer of 1862. At times, when she was very tired, and the children very troublesome,

Jean felt that the weight of it all was too great to be borne, and she would cry over the endless sewing, and rebel against the fate which had cast such responsibility upon her. But the fortitude with which her mother bore her sufferings, and Mrs. Burletson's cheery greetings the next day when she came loaded with every delicacy Ria's cookery, and the resources of the farm, could supply, cheered and strengthened Jean anew. She had many kind friends, but it was upon Mrs. Burletson she learned to lean in these days. She dreaded to see cold and stormy weather when the old lady was unable to venture out, for her visits were the happiest time in the hard day. John, also, was a welcome guest. All coolness and constraint between them had vanished long ago, and the old friendship—with a difference—had revived in all its strength. His refusal to volunteer was still a mystery to Jean, but she was content, now, to let it be. His work among the poor of the district was well known to her, and won her warmest admiration. They did not, however, see much of one another. It was the children whom John came to see. These poor little mortals, in spite of all Jean's efforts, had a melancholy time of it, for they were old enough to understand something of the calamity that was coming upon them. John soon became the object of their warmest adoration; and all their holidays were spent at the farm, where they fed chickens—and hunted them when no one was looking—eat apples without stint, played hide-and-seek in the great barns, and enjoyed themselves to their heart's content. They were favourites everywhere. Even Mrs. Haniman, in theory the sternest of disciplinarians, had a soft place in her heart for 'Martha's family,' and when Mamy, the youngest, a fascinating eight-year-old, developed chicken-pox, Mrs. Haniman carried her off to her own house to be cured.

Jean's greatest support in her trials were Seth's letters. He had been one of the fortunate ones, and while comrades around him sickened and died he escaped without a scratch. In the Shenandoah Valley, at Antietam, at Gettysburg itself he fought with his regiment, and came gaily through it all. He would complain at times half humorously of the hardships of campaigning, but always said he was well in health, and hard as a nail. He had the faculty of description, and a rapid pen, and, as far as he knew it, Jean received a comprehensive account of the progress of the war, with swift and trenchant criticisms of the Union generals. Seth spared no one. In strongest language

he condemned McClellan's over-caution, Pope's brutality, the incapacity of Burnside, and the vanity of Hooker. Surely never in the annals of war were the commanders of an army subject to such scathing criticism by their men as in the American struggle of the sixties. The later letters, or such portions of them as related to the war, Jean read to John and his mother, which led to John's maps finding their way to the store, and to many hours of talk about the war. Jean was always struck by the wide grasp and accurate knowledge which John possessed of military matters, and his keen interest in them. She wondered more than ever why he had not gone to the war, and brooded over it, until one afternoon when Mrs. Burletson was in the sick-room, and she was alone with John, some chance word of his revealed the truth.

'Tell me that again, John. You say your mother feels so lonesome when you are away—that you find it makes a difference to her health. Is that really so?'

'I fear it is,' he replied, surprised at her eager tone. 'I am all she has, as you may say. She kind of clings to me.'

'Then I know at last why you never went to the war,' Jean exclaimed. 'It would have killed her to part with you, and you knew it.'

Her lips trembled as she spoke, and her eyes filled with tears. John saw that he could not evade her now. He tried to laugh it off.

'Cornered, cornered! as the boys say. Don't you ever tell mother.'

'Oh, John, can you—but you never can—forgive me?'

'Pshaw! There is nothing——'

'But there is everything. I have slandered you to your face, and to—to others. I have been unjust, cruel—everything that's mean. Oh, why did you not tell me at first? Why did you deny it when I asked you long ago?'

She was crying in real earnest now, tears which burnt her cheeks.

'Jean, Jean, you must not take it this way,' he cried, laying his hand on hers a moment, drawing it away the next and thrusting it in his pocket, 'the past is dead.' I don't feel I have anything to forgive now. If I was hurt once it was my own fault. I kept it all to myself because of mother. Had she known I stayed away from the war for her she would not have had any peace of mind again. I knew if one person were told,

even you, it would be sure to get to her. I think now I was a fool. But that does not alter facts. Please let it all alone. I am glad though to think you understand me now. Hush, here's mother.'

As Mrs. Selby grew weaker Jean nursed her day and night, except at intervals for necessary rest, when Mrs. Haniman, at her own request, took her place. Jean began to realise now in the fullest degree what a responsibility the up-bringing of her brothers and sisters was going to be. Her father, it was true, was a well-to-do man; lack of means would never trouble them. But Jean had found that no help from him was to be expected in the guidance of the children. He was not unkind to them, simply indifferent. Soul, body, and mind, he was given to money-making, and to maintaining his public position among his neighbours. He was a zealous, energetic guardian of public trusts; in business he was hard, over-reaching, and industrious; in his home, a blank and a nonentity. Their mother had been all in all to the younger children. At her death Jean saw that she must take her place.

Mrs. Selby died the last day of January, lingering on a month longer than any one expected. Jean kept her self-control to the last; made every arrangement, and saw to every detail of the household and its wants. But when it was over and she went into the still room and gazed upon the face that never more would answer by a look or smile to any words of hers, when that bitter blow was dealt which only comes at such a time in all its fullness, the realisation of her loss came home to her, and she broke down. Mrs. Haniman was there, and though an important committee meeting claimed her attention in half an hour, she did not leave the store until late in the evening, putting the children to bed and sitting with Jean until the girl went to sleep, tired out with grief.

The day of the funeral was bleak and wintry, with a north-westerly wind sweeping in angry blasts over the bare places and whining round house corners with an ominous moan. The afternoon of the next day, John, finishing his work early, hitched up his team to drive into town for the weekly supplies.

'You will be caught in a storm, son,' his mother said, handing him his gloves.

'Like enough,' he replied, smiling; 'but if I lose my way the ponies will not. No danger, mother.'

The snow began to fall before he reached the last of his

fences. By the time he reached the open road it was coming down so fast that he found it hard to see the track. He was going at a brisk pace, when one of the horses shied at a figure in the road—a woman's figure hurrying by without shawl or other protection from the storm—Jean.

In a moment John's team were on their haunches, and he had leapt to the ground.

'What has happened?'

There was a dazed look in Jean's eyes as she turned that frightened him.

'I was going to your mother,' she said, in a voice that sounded hollow and unnatural. 'Don't stop for me. I know my way, and the storm cools my brain.'

'You have not told me what is the matter.'

'I have had news from Seth—horrible news. But go on to town. I don't feel like talking now. I will tell you when you get back.'

She would have passed on now, but he took her hand and held it.

'Get in. We'll be there in five minutes.'

'Oh no. Let me walk.'

'Get in.'

The words came sternly, and Jean obeyed.

John did not speak again. All the rugs and his own heavy overcoat he wrapped closely round her, then turned his team and put them at the gallop. His blood was on fire, and the horses knew it and tore home at furious speed. In a slight hollow of the road Jean was jolted against him, and his heart leapt up in fierce joy. In her direst extremity she had come to him and his for comfort and for help. All the love that he had crushed down into the hidden chambers of his heart, so firmly that he scarcely knew himself at times whether it still existed, burst its bonds now and poured through his veins like new blood. How precious they were, those minutes, as she sat cowering against him—worth a lifetime of unhappiness. Then came the lights of the farm, and he had to help her down and leave her with his mother. Presently he would see her again, and hear what had happened to Seth—poor lad! Now, for some hard work. He took the horses to the stable and rubbed them down until they shone like burnished copper; then he went to the wood-pile behind the house, and picking out the toughest log there, hewed and split it into firewood; then he

looked at his watch. He had kept away for a whole hour; that was enough.

Mrs. Burletson was sitting before the fire talking. Jean on a stool at her feet listening with woe-begone face, colourless, hopeless. John thought she looked the picture of despair.

'Sonny,' his mother cried as he came slowly toward them, inclined to feel himself in the way, 'we are needing you. I have a matter to discuss in which we want your mind.'

She spoke with energy and some excitement, at which John wondered vaguely. He came to the fire as he was told, and stood leaning on the mantelpiece, looking down into Jean's face.

'I want your counsel, John. I told Jean, and she knows it to be true, that no one is so well acquainted with the movement of the armies and with the lay of the country in the South as you. Seth has been taken prisoner. That is the news Jean brings. Luckily enough he was able to send word by a note, passed through by an officer who was exchanged. The boy is not wounded, and as far as we can learn is well in health; but Jean is distracted nigh to desperation by what the papers tell of men in Southern prisons. I say that the papers lie; but my words do not convince her—poor child!"

'You are good to try and comfort me,' Jean broke in drearily. 'I know what is true and what is not; but I interrupted you.'

'Well, Seth, I say,' Mrs. Burleston continued, 'is in prison, a place called Santanelle, in Georgia. Now, as soon as I heard this, I said to Jean "hope," and I say so again. You shall tell me, John, whether my ideas are moonshine. Did you not say once that there was talk of an army under General Sherman going right through Georgia?'

'That is so, and I heard more to-day. The advance is to be made in the spring. They are beginning preparations now.'

Mrs. Burletson patted Jean's hand.

'Did I not tell you he would know? Here is my plan then. If Seth is in prison in Georgia, and Sherman marches through that State, is it not possible that Seth might be rescued?'

John looked doubtful.

'Georgia is a tremendous big country, mother, and Sherman's business will be to get through the best way he can. There will be no time for him to welter round picking up prisoners unless they are directly in the line of march, and Santanelle is in Northern Georgia. But go on—let me hear all.'

'It was my idea that if in Sherman's army there were folk, or say one man, interested in Seth, it might be that a party could go forth and bring Seth out. Of course, it goes without saying, that it all depends on the man.' Mrs. Burleston sat very erect, and looked at John with searching eyes. 'But I have known men who could do it. You may ask me to find them. I will answer that question later. First you must tell me whether, given such men, the notion has sense in it. I want to know your idea, son.'

But John had turned away.

'Your words, mother,' he said at last, 'have point in them. There will be difficulties at every turn—more than we can see—but there might be a chance, ay, more than a chance, of success. And it is the only way. So much is certain. Exchange of prisoners now, they say, is not to be done. What does Jean say?'

'It seems impossible to me,' she answered, in the same hopeless tone she had used before. 'If it could be done, and I don't see that, where is the man to be found who would try? Oh, why do we talk about what can never be? Excuse me, I am abrupt and rude. If only I were a man, or free to go as I am. But I am held in, having the children to think of, and my helplessness maddens me. I think I will go home.'

She rose and kissed Mrs. Burletson, but the old lady detained her with one hand, and, rising too, laid the other on John's shoulder.

'John,' she said, 'it is time for you to speak. I know by your face that what has been working in my mind is now in yours. She must not go in ignorance. Speak, and tell Jean where to find this man.'

A pause—while Jean, startled, bewildered, looked John in the face with questioning eyes. Then he spoke at last.

'Mother has told you my thoughts as well as her own. This thing shall be done if I can do it.'

'You!'

'Yes, Jean, me.' His voice was low and strained, but full of determination. 'I would not offer if there were any other way, or another man. I did not go to the war because I would not leave my mother—she may know that now.'

'I guessed it, son, from the first,' Mrs. Burletson cried, 'and have known it long.'

'I did not go,' he repeated, 'because it would have killed her

to live alone. Now it is different, she will have you. Besides, I don't volunteer to stay out the war, but go to find Seth and then come back. Mind, I don't know that I can do much or anything. But all that is in me you may count upon. And, if you will take my services, I will seek the boy and bring him home, please God, sound as he went away.'

And Jean. She tried to speak, then dumbly held out a hand to each, and breaking down utterly, fell upon Mrs. Burletson's neck, and burst into a passion of tears.

CHAPTER XIV.

JOHN and his mother went late to rest that night; but Jean was taken home early, as she had her family to put to bed. It was a very short drive to John. His nerves were still thrilled with excitement, though it was purified by a determination to procure Seth's freedom at any cost. He did not want to talk, it was enough to feel that they were together. In the evening, after consideration of practical ways and means, he began to be smitten with remorseful pangs about his mother. He left his table, drew a stool to her feet, and leant his head against her knee.

'Mother, I did not know I could be so selfish.'

'Why selfish, son?'

'Because I am content to leave you.'

'Thank God,' she said, devoutly.

John looked up.

'Why do you say that? I ought not to be. We have been all in all to one another.'

She stroked his forehead.

'I am your mother, dear, no more. You gave me three years of your manhood's prime. God forgive me for taking it; but you did this because of your love for me. That three years is over. I am as happy to-night as you are—happier than I have ever been since Luke read out the Proclamation. Something you said after that gave me full knowledge of why you had stood aside from the war. You should not have done it for me, John, you should not!'

For answer he took her hand and kissed it, and they were silent for a long time.

Mrs. Burletson broke the pause.

'Anyway, whatever betides down South, whether you are doing your duty under General Sherman, John, or seeking Seth, you will know, now, that I can never be miserable or lonesome. Jean will be with me a great deal, and I have the joy of feeling that you are on the path I set before you with my own hand. I cannot want more. All I shall worry about will be if the men you leave in charge of the farm and the stock don't do their duty; but I know you will arrange those things.'

'That does not trouble me in the least,' he answered. 'Jim Hallett will be your manager. With your head and his, and one more labourer, the farm will go right well.'

'Then tell me now about your plans? I was thinking of them while you drove Jean home, and the more I thought the more difficult it all seemed.'

'It is difficult. The army for Georgia is to be composed of picked men. A raw recruit will not be wanted there. Besides, as a private in the ranks, I would be tied to my regiment—to my company—and could not move except where my bit of the army happened to march. We will have to think out an idea, quite a different idea from volunteering.'

'That is so. I see by your face, though, that you have already thought of a way. Let me hear it?'

John laughed tenderly.

'What do you not see? Yes, I have a sort of notion. The contract is such a big one when you come to work it out, that I must fly high to start with. I intend going to Washington with all the introductions I can get, my hope being that among them I may find one that will take me to the White House.'

'The President, John?'

'Abraham Lincoln himself.'

'I like that idea. But what could he do?'

'Almost all I need, if he should feel like it. I was reading the other day in that Reb paper I get sometimes, *The Richmond Examiner*, a rather smart argument for the right of Secession, which they took, they said, from certain clauses in the Constitution of the United States. I went straight to Attorney Thorpe's office and read the constitution, end to end. Among other things, which I never knew before, I found that the President is commander-in-chief of the army. It strikes me, therefore, that it is worth while to try for a word from him to General Sherman. Whether I will ever get to him, and what

he'll say if I do, remains to be seen; but I mean to try. If this fails, why, I will go to Georgia and interview the General on my own account.'

John made his preparations very quietly, and by his request no one was told of his plans until the last moment, in consequence of which he escaped innumerable questions and much good advice. He saw Jean alone once before he went away. He had made up his mind not to do so, but his resolution failed him at the last, and he called in for a few minutes on his way to the railway depot. His visit was quite unexpected. Luke was in the store, and Jean was giving Sam, the eldest of the boys, a reading lesson. Sam, however, discreet beyond his years, not only retired with his book at John's entrance, but mounted guard in the hall to prevent interruption.

It was not a sentimental interview at all. Jean's greeting was a merry laugh, for it happened that Attorney Thorpe, a well-meaning but fussy and particular person, had begged her that morning to hint to John the paramount importance of good clothes in Washington, and that the blue jean he affected in Chippewa must not be thought of—and here was John dressed in this same blue jean. John was given the attorney's message at once, and laughed too.

'Tell my dear old friend,' he said, 'that I have seriously thought the question out, and I reckon the best thing a man can do when he goes into the world is to look what he really is as near as he can. I am a Wisconsin farmer, and I wear the clothes I am used to, and that are used to me. But, Jean, I just came in to say good-bye, and ask whether you had any further message for Seth, I have the packet safe that you gave mother for him.'

'It contains all, thank you; but I have much to say to you, John, if I could only put it into words.'

'Don't try,' John cried, with a grimace; 'that would be too bad, for I cannot talk, and I hate that folk should do what is not in me. Good-bye; I will do my best; and be sure that he and you are worth it all.'

Their hands met with a long, close pressure, and they looked into one another's eyes. Then he was gone. In the passage he ran against Sam, and caught the boy in his arms.

'Sam, lad, can you make a promise and keep it?'

''Course I can, for you.'

'Then swear to this; be a man, though you are only twelve

years old; never give Jean one hour of trouble till I come home again, and if any one else does, go for him straight.'

'What a thing to ask!' was the shrill answer; and Sam struggled back to his feet swelling with manly scorn. 'Ain't she *Jean?* 'Sides, Mr. John, I am thirteen come two weeks to-day, not twelve at all.'

Nevertheless, Sam went back into the parlour a graver boy than he had left it, and when he saw that Jean looked tired and heavy-eyed declared he had a headache and would go to bed 'right now.'

John reached Washington early in March. It was still bitterly cold, but the snow had melted in the principal thoroughfares, and the queer straggling city of 'hovels and palaces' was drearier and muddier than usual. Washington in those days was a city of large public buildings, immensely wide, badly-paved streets, lined with wooden shanties, stone mansions, and shops of brick and stucco—the queerest medley of contrasts of any city in the States. It was full of people, and for the whole of his first day there, John amused himself by exploring it, and entering into conversation with all sorts and conditions of men. There was method in his inquiries, however, for they all ended with queries concerning the personal idiosyncrasies of the President. He heard a great deal of nonsense and many palpable lies, but picked up certain important facts; that which struck him the most being the information that any man who had business with Abraham Lincoln might go to the White House at a certain hour of the day and see him. He would do this, he thought, if all else failed. The next day he presented his introductions, and his tribulations began. The great men were 'busy,' and days passed before he could get an audience with them. When he did so at last, by sheer perseverance, he was told that the discovery of America by Columbus was easy compared to what he had set himself to do.

'Go home, my good friend,' said one, the greatest man of all, who did what the rest only pretended to do—listened to what John had to say. 'Go right back, and tell the poor lad's folk that there is nothing to be done until the Confederacy breaks up. Do you suppose the President can see to such a little thing? You can interview him, certainly—eleven in the morning is the best time, I am told. But I put it to you—among the hundred thousand prisoners held by the rebels is one private soldier of any real account, except to those who know him?

The President will shake hands, hear your tale, tell you, maybe, a little story to show you how hopeless it is, and that will be all. I am very sorry. Glad to have seen you. Now, *good-bye.*'

What was to be done next? John, a pessimist by temperament, felt that these remarks contained the soundest of common sense. But—and here he would drop his head between his shoulders as obstinate men have a trick of doing—a way had to be found. He must try the President; and eleven o'clock the next morning found him at the White House. It also found a few hundred others there. John went with the rest into a long corridor and waited. When the President came in, John modestly shrank into a corner and watched his face from a distance, as he spoke to this person and that, a word or two to each. He did not come near John, whose bashfulness was too great to permit him to push forward; besides, of what use would a word in a crowd be to him? But though John went away no wiser than he came, he was glad he had been to the White House. As he walked back to his hotel he could see the President still, towering from his great height above all common men, with long cadaverous face and deepset sunken eyes. Weary, melancholy eyes—the eyes of a man who was never free from care; upon whose shoulders lay the burden of a nation in its agony; who felt its griefs and miseries and dangers, as if they were his own. A man who never left himself in peace even during his rare intervals of rest, but was for ever, night and day, planning, thinking, deciding for others; holding in his strong hands the welfare of millions and knowing it; yet never losing nerve or heart. Learning from those about him all they had to teach, listening to everything they had to say; and then drawing into himself, and, after silent commune with his own judgment and conscience, controlling and dictating all that was done. Such was Abraham Lincoln.

All afternoon John wandered aimlessly about the streets trying to find a way where there was no way, losing heart and hope every hour. He made inquiry at the railway offices, and found that the wealth of a millionaire would not enable him to approach the army in Georgia without a permit from the war office. He went there, saw a minor official, and was told with unnecessary abruptness that his application was absurd, and that he might as well try and reach the moon as General Sherman. At length, tired out, he returned to his hotel for supper. When

he had finished a restlessness greater than his weariness sent him forth again into the city. He wandered now, half mechanically, in the direction of the White House. As he was passing the gates, the sight of a man on the other side of the road brought him to a sudden stop. It was the President, strolling down the street with long, slow strides, his head bent, his hands behind his back. John's heart leapt into his mouth, and before he had made up his mind what he was going to say, he crossed the road and confronted Abraham Lincoln. Then his breath forsook him, and all he had presence of mind to do was to raise his hat. The President raised his.

'Do you want something of me, friend?'

How many scores of men every day of Lincoln's life 'wanted something' of him! Yet his tone was so kindly, so scrupulously polite, that John's diffidence broke down.

'I had a question to ask, Mr. President,' he said, gaining courage every moment. 'Yow will be too busy, likely, to listen now. I should be very thankful if you would tell me when it would be convenient for me to see you—alone.'

'You have your chance, this minute—take it. I am walking to the war office—ask me your question on the way.'

They turned and walked together, John taking two steps to Lincoln's one.

'It concerns a friend of mine in Santanelle prison, Northern Georgia, sir.' John was cool now, and clipped his words to the briefest point; time was all important. The president muttered something to himself, and shuddered slightly.

'Go on,' he said, as John paused. 'Those boys in prison are our worst troubles. But let me hear it all.'

'I intend to get him out,' John continued. 'I have a little money, but prisoners, as I understand, cannot be exchanged.'

'So. Well——'

'The only idea I have left is to go to Georgia with General Sherman, and when the army reaches the point nearest to Santanelle, get leave to try and save my friend. I know enough, sir,' John added hurriedly, fearing that he would be stopped by a direct negative, 'to tell that the general would not take me on such terms as a volunteer. Would he—could it be at all—that I might join the army in any other way than a soldier? I wish to ask you this. I have money to pay my expenses. All I need is to get to the prison some way. I have promised to find this man, and I must do it. Could you help me?'

The murder was out, and John waited for an answer, white and grim. He felt no hope of success. A few words of decisive discouragement would be given and it would be over. For a few minutes the President answered nothing, walking slowly on down Pensylvania Avenue, past the war office in a deep reverie. Presently he looked down at his companion sideways.

'You call this man your friend. Is he no more than that?'

'No, sir. But he is engaged to be married to the oldest friend I have. I have promised to bring him back to her.'

'Ah!'

Another pause, then Lincoln said—

'Have you quite thought this thing out, friend? Sherman has no use for any man who will not fight. You will be obliged anyhow to take chances with death all the way along. Supposing you got the man outside and died yourself? It strikes me you are a little away in the clouds at present.'

John looked surprised. It was the first time any one had accused him of building castles in the air.

'I do not think so,' he said bluntly. 'I know most things are against me, but, you see, there is no one else. As for fighting, I will take that as it comes, and Sherman may make what use of me he likes—if he will let me go along with him. I am bound to go some way.'

The President, who was watching him keenly, nodded without speaking, and turning abruptly, walked back at a brisk pace to the war office. Under the lights at the door, as the sentry on duty saluted, he took a card from his pocket, and writing on it in pencil gave it to John.

'Bring this with you at three to-morrow. I can give you half an hour. We will talk about this thing, and—see. No'—as John tried to thank him.—'you have no occasion. Men with just such ideas as yours do not often come my way. Besides, friend,' with one of his rare smiles, 'if it were a sacrifice to me to grant this interview, where you lay down your life I may give a little time, I guess, and be a better man for doing so. Good night.'

He strode up the steps, the doors closed behind him, leaving John on the pavement alone, the precious card in his hand. He stood a moment looking at it, then slowly collecting his wits, turned back, and went to bed to dream of the coming interview all night long.

CHAPTER XV.

WHEN John presented the President's card at the White House, he was shown into a room where Lincoln was dictating letters to his secretary. The President extended his hand over the table and pointed to a chair, but did not pause in what he was saying, until the letter was finished. Then the secretary departed, and Lincoln poked the fire.

'The worst enemy of long men like me,' he said, 'is bad circulation when we grow old. I can't keep warm these days. You don't look as if you suffered that way, or any other—tough, aren't you?'

'I was only sick once, and that was measles.'

'Can you ride?'

The suddenness of this question amused John.

'Hard telling, sir. I break my own colts, and around where I live they think me a rider. I did, too, until I tried one of the western bucking horses.'

'How long did you remain?' said the President gravely.

'Five minutes.'

'Then you *can* ride. Did you never volunteer?'

John looked confused, and Lincoln raised his hand.

'Do not answer if the question hurts. I would never ask a man to say a word if he don't feel like it.'

But as it happened John did feel like it. There are some men, though not many, who attract the confidence of the most reserved and reticent. Lincoln was pre-eminently such a man. His simplicity and directness, the kindly consideration of his manner, and a subtle magnetic sympathy about him charmed and conquered John. Before he knew it, he was telling the President of the United States how he had longed to go to the war, and why he had stayed at home. Then led on by shrewd and searching questions he went further still, until Lincoln knew, as we know it, the story of his life. All at once he remembered the time, and found to his horror that the precious half-hour he had been allowed was almost gone.

Lincoln caught the expression of his visitor's face as he looked at the clock. His eyes twinkled, though his mouth was grave.

'Don't be scared; we have five minutes yet. I said last night that men of your ideas do not often come to this house.

I could say more now that I know you. I should like to see your mother, I have an idea she would remind me of my own—God bless her! You see, I was born in the country, and bred among farm-folk as you have been, and your speech and dress, John, bring back old times. I would like to help you, though I see no way yet. Did you ever hear the story of the farming man who came from Illinois? He wanted fifty dollars to buy a horse; but he had no money, and no one would lend him any; and all the property he possessed were twenty-five hogs. Folks said this would beat him, but they were wrong, for he started right away to drive the hogs to Chicago to sell. Ever driven hogs? I have. Well—it took that farmer about six days to get twenty miles, and his hogs ran away thirty-five times; he went without sleep all the while, and had very little to eat. But he got to Chicago, and offered them to a packer.

'"How much?" says the packer.

'"Fifty dollars."

'"Then you won't get it."

'"I will," said the farmer.

'The packer laughed.

'"The best in the market only fetch $1·75. Yours are scrubs."

'"All right, then," said the farmer, "I must try another way."

'The packer looked at the man.

'"What are you going to do?"

'"Hire a shed, kill, dress, and pack 'em myself."

'"But how will you live the while?" for he knew the farmer could not have a cent.

'"On them. What ever comes, I will take away from here that fifty dollars—'cos *I said I would*." Those men are partners now, and rich, I am told."'

He looked at his watch.

'Half-past three. You must quit, friend. Call again to-morrow fifteen minutes earlier, and we'll talk business.'

John found the President alone next day, with a large map spread upon the table.

'Come around here,' was Lincoln's greeting, 'You will have sharper eyes than mine. I want to make out Santanelle. Have you ever seen a map of Georgia?'

'I have two at home, but neither is of any account. Santanelle is north-west, sir.'

The President looked up over his spectacles.

'Fond of maps, are you? Do you draw?'

'I try to. My mother and I reckoned to keep track of the armies, and as the atlas I had was but small I drew the maps myself on a larger scale around the seat of war in Virginia and Tennessee. They are but bad ones, and only serve to give a rough idea."

Lincoln left the table, adjusted his spectacles, and thrust his hands beneath his coat tails.

'I have made inquiries. I find it may not be necessary for you to go South at all—we may get an exchange."

He spoke slowly, watching John's face. That face expressed nothing but blank astonishment.

'What do you think of it?' Lincoln went on, dryly.

'Why that his folk—I mean Jean, the President knew who Jean was—would be ready to give her life to you in gratitude.'

'And you—what about yourself, John Burletson?'

John hung his head, and Lincoln saw his teeth clench.

'If you want the truth, and I could not frame aught else to you, I feel as if you'd robbed me. This is my only chance to go; but there—excuse my rudeness—I could not, probably, have saved the boy at all. I am nothing in it—anyhow. I thank you for my mother's sake.'

'Will you not go if I find the means?'

John raised his head quickly.

'I have longed to all these years. Since the day I knew the slaves were to be free, it has been almost more than I could bear to stay at home.'

The President's face lighted up, and his sad eyes glowed with enthusiasm.

'Then you approved of the proclamation,' he said, slowly. 'Tell me!'

'The whole West approved. You gave us heart and hope when they were needed most. We have been a different people since. Many a man who'd not fight for the Union has given his life to free the slaves. The war is sacred now.'

Lincoln stepped forward, and the men clasped hands.

'Friend,' he said, in a tone as tender as though he were addressing a younger brother, 'you must go to the front. I have only been trying you. Exchanges cannot be made now. If that boy is to be brought out—if those hogs are to be sold—you must put your shoulder to the thing and do it

yourself. The most I can do is to clear the way; that I will gladly do.'

He laid his arm on John's shoulder caressingly.

'You are a fraud, John. One of those men who go through life telling lies—about themselves. We will have you in the army, and, please God, keep you there till we send you home with a star upon your collar. I shall write to your mother, so that you will not get a chance of backing down. I wish her to know that we feel we owe her something for sending us her son.'

'She will be the proudest woman in the United States,' John exclaimed.

'She has need to be middling proud of you. When do you start?'

'I will go to-night if there is a train South.'

'One of the men whose wheels are always greased, eh? Well, you shall have a note to General W. T. Sherman in an hour. If you get this man out, I should like to know it.'

He shook John's hand warmly, and led him to the door to cut short his thanks. When he had gone, Lincoln wheeled a chair in front of the fire, and put his feet upon the mantelpiece. It was an old habit he still indulged in when alone. He used to say he could think better so.

'Uncle Billy Sherman will not like this,' he said to himself; 'but I will have my way, and he must find a place for the boy. It is such men who keep the Union together and will win the war."

John left Washington at seven o'clock that evening. The President was better than his word. Besides an autograph letter to General Sherman was a pass over the railroads to Chattanooga, Sherman's head-quarters, which provided John with a free journey and excellent treatment from the officials all along the line. It was well he had this pass, or he would have had the greatest difficulty in reaching his destination. The further he went, the greater became the crush of trains, bearing freight for the army. Nothing but such freight was allowed at this time. All private baggage and stores were ruthlessly switched into sidings, to be removed at the owner's pleasure or to rot as the case might be. John, as a private individual, might have waited like these cars, but the pass, which elevated him to the rank of a special messenger, overcame all difficulties, and, after some unavoidable delays, an engine was detached for his benefit, and he was whirled on to Chattanooga.

The army here, and nothing but the army. Trim, sunburnt men were on the platform in uniform, soldiers were unloading cars, a squad was drilling on a plot of waste land by the wayside; while, further away were rows upon rows of tents. Everywhere was the hum and bustle of preparation, the men working for their lives. The stirring sight made John's heart beat quickly, and when the strains of a band and the rattle of drums sounded from the other side of the camp, he could have shouted aloud in his excitement. The train stopped, and he was confronted by an orderly who was somewhat taken aback at the sight of this plain farming man in a private car.

'Secret-service dead head!' he said to himself with disgust. 'He'll find Uncle Billy don't take much stock of him.'

'You can see the general now, if you want,' he said to John, after narrowly examining the letter and pass. 'Come around with me.'

John was surprised. His notion of a general's quarters were taken from the newspaper accounts of the splendour of General McClellan, the least of which depicted a man in imposing gold-laced uniform, surrounded by a brilliant staff, and attended by a guard of soldiers always under arms. Such a man, he imagined, could not be approached except at certain times and seasons, and then only by special permission. The readiness of the orderly to take him straight to Sherman he put down in his simplicity to the President's note. As they approached a tent which stood apart, with a flag flying over it, John looked in vain for the brilliant staff and imposing uniforms. Near the tent, which in itself was rather shabbier than those about it, sat a dozen men in camp-chairs smoking pipes. Could these be Sherman's staff? And could the man in the centre, dressed in a jacket of faded blue serge, and battered black felt hat, sucking at a pipe which would not draw with as much vigour and concentrated energy as though he were charging the enemy—could this be the general himself! There was no doubt of it, for the orderly stepped up smartly, as a soldier does under the eye of his commander, and saluting, presented the letter John had given him. While the general read it John looked at him with keen interest, and noted the square head and prominent chin, the lips set tightly together, the eyes extraordinarily keen and alert, and felt that he was in the presence of one of the greatest men in the army. The general read the letter hastily, and cast a sharp glance at John; then read it again—

slowly, and beckoned. John stepped forward. He wanted to salute but could not for the life of him remember which hand to raise, so lifted his hat instead.

'What is your name?'

'John Burletson, general.'

'Where are you from?'

'Chippewa—Wisconsin.'

'Seen any fighting?'

'Not yet.'

'Do you want to?'

'I do so.' The reply was so emphatic that the staff chuckled.

'When will you begin?'

'At your orders, sir.'

'What baggage have you?'

'This,' John displayed one small grip-sack. The officers laughed again.

'H'm,' said the general, 'the President says you have ideas. I begin to think he has grounds for the notion. But ideas, mind, are of no kind of use to a soldier until he gets experience. Do you know why we were whipped at Bull Run?'

'Our want of discipline for one thing?'

'You have struck it.'

'But after all,' John added eagerly, 'if we had held the enemy's position we would have done as well as they—or better.'

'Why so?'

'With raw troops it is so much easier to defend than attack, at least,' pulling up as he remembered to whom he was speaking, 'so I have understood.'

Sherman himself laughed this time.

'He talks like General Scott. The only thing that puzzles me is why he was not at Bull Run himself. However, if the war-fever has come late, it seems to have stuck its claws deep. See, then, my man. Report yourself to the sergeant of couriers. Orderly, take him to your mess. To-morrow we will see what lies behind all this.'

John withdrew and rejoined the orderly, who, from a respectful distance had been a keenly interested listener to the foregoing conversation. This orderly was a smart well-built fellow of about John's own age. He wore long boots and spurs, and walked with the swing of a cavalry man.

He looked at John with a friendly grin.

'First time you've met Uncle Billy, I presume?'

'I guess it is.'

'But you've heard of him—I'll swear."

'Most folks have—why?'

'You played your cards so well.'

John looked up.

'I made a mess of it you mean. Guess that is so. Better luck next time.'

'No; that was not my meaning. You had a steepish pitch to climb, for if there's one thing that riles Uncle Billy Sherman, it is a recommendation from Washington. But you climbed, and he is a man who when he takes hold, will freeze uncommon hard. Now for supper, mate.'

They were in the midst of the camp, and from every side came the glare of fires, the clatter of pots and pans and a smell savoury to hungry men. Soldiers were cooking their evening meal; mostly in frying-pans of every remarkable size and shape, battered and dinted and old. The faces of the men John noticed were battered too, but brown and healthy. There was little talking among them, and none of the loud laughter and shouting that went on in the camp of recruits at Washington. Sherman's men seemed to be too hungry to laugh, and those who had eaten, smoked quietly and chatted in low tones. Nor could John discover any of the elaborate cooking ranges which had been a feature near the officers quarters in the regiment he had seen up North. Everything was as plain and simple in construction, and nearly as easy to carry away as General Sherman's old camp-chair.

The orderly halted before one of the oldest and most rickety cooking-stoves John had ever seen. Here an immense man with arms bare to the shoulders, dressed in a striped flannel shirt and regimental pants, was on his hands and knees blowing at the embers of a dying fire to ignite a handful of kindling.

'This is our sergeant,' the orderly remarked to John, 'when he is through blowing, if he don't bust, I will introduce you.'

The man at the fire, though he heard the words, paid no attention to the speaker, but puffed steadily at the stove until a blaze rewarded his efforts, and the fire was well in hand. Then he rose slowly to his feet, and surveying them with arms

akimbo, addressed the orderly in a voice like the boom of heavy artillery.

'You blasted coon of a deserter, Mike, where've you been? Mighty little grub you shall stow away to-night. I left this fire to you.'

'Deserter indeed!' was the retort, 'Go to—Uncle Billy. Man alive, why don't you salute? Don't you recognise the President's brother-in-law? He's come to serve in the rank, and Uncle Billy's sent him to you. Friend,' addressing John, 'Cartwright Hornber stands before you. The thirstiest man the Almighty ever made; sergeant of couriers; major-domo of our mess; a demon for his vittles; a baa-lamb to the foe; we call him Joshua. Sergeant, this is John Burletson, Esquire, from the White House, Washington.'

Hornber grunted.

'Dry up, you. John Burletson, I am pleased to make your acquaintance.' He had been looking hard at John while the orderly was speaking, and now extended his hand. 'I don't know who you really are. No one takes any notice of Mike, but I like your face, and could wish you were in better company. Set down. Mike, you skunk, help me to get supper, we are late to-night.'

This last injunction was quite unnecessary, for the orderly's coat was off before it came, and he had set to work with a skill and activity John could not sufficiently admire. He presently discovered that this Mike was a corporal and Hornber's bosom friend. The spectacle of these men working while he sat still, soon became too much for John, and, at his own request, he began drawing water and cutting up wood for future use. One by one other men dropped in hot and dusty from continuous riding, and by the time the meal was ready there were a score of them, some squatting on blankets, some on billets of wood, others on their own hats. John looked at them with great curiosity. They were couriers to Sherman's staff; a courier's duties being those of orderly, messenger, and aide-de-camp, as occasion might require. They were the best riders in the army; men of proved courage, nerve, and intelligence; as much accustomed to being under fire as they rode from division to division, from front to rear, conveying orders in writing, or by word of mouth, to the officers in command, as mill hands to the clash of machinery. As they ate, they talked of the war; when the march towards Georgia was to begin; of the gigantic

scale of Sherman's preparations; of the distrust expressed of the general by some of the papers in the North, disputing among themselves as to whether it had any foundation in fact. Finally expressing in the strongest language—John thought a little for his benefit—their contempt for everybody and everything connected with the Government, the press, and the war office. John listened to it all in modest silence. No one spoke to him, and he looked upon himself as a nonentity, allowed to partake of the mess in sufferance, through Sherman's orders. He would have been much amazed had he overheard the conversation between Hornber and Mike as they turned in.

'Cart, old friend, give us your ideas. How will he shape?'

'Finely. I'll bet you five dollars on it. Come!'

'Oh, it's my idea too. But why do you think so? He's fresh as green corn. Our work will be kind of refined hell to him.'

'It will be so. But he'll go through. A man so straight in the eyes, firm-set round the jaw, and quiet in the tongue, is bound to have it in him. And, mark me, he's got brains, devilish good brains, which not one in ten of us cusses really have, though we all think so. Anyway, I'll lay my money if you'll take it up. Poor devil, I am sorry for him though in one way. If Uncle Billy has took hold as you say, the boy will have his flesh peeled clean away with work. While as for danger, we all know that those Uncle Billy loves, as the song says, die young.'

(*To be continued.*)

THE AUTHOR OF 'THE HEIR OF REDCLYFFE.'

THE 'Author of "The Heir of Redclyffe,"' 'Miss Yonge,' 'Arachne!' In these pages, which were for so long her own, and which owe her so much, it is difficult, at least for the present writer, to feel enough of an outsider to speak with grace about her at all. And yet there is a great deal that many of us can remember, and which at the present juncture many others may like to know. We who have to walk farther and to guide others on roads on which she first set our feet may well recall the beginnings, and see how they have led up, not to the end—who can see all the long road of progress?—but to that part of humanity's journey on which at present we find ourselves.

The first 'Charlotte Yonge scholar' at Oxford and Cambridge will be the intellectual descendant of the first 'Gosling' who answered four questions a month for Mother Goose. She will be carrying on her education after she is grown up, just as the set of cousins and friends who formed the old 'Gosling Society' were taught by Miss Yonge to do. She will write a better hand, and she will not use pink foreign paper to save postage. Let us hope that, if her aims are less ambitious, she may learn to carry them out more perfectly. No student of philosophy and natural science can hope to do *more* than 'define space,' and we trust that no examiner in the history schools will ever ask to be told of '*all* the revolutions in the world into which money matters ever entered.' But with such boundless ardour we began to study after schoolroom days. Then we aspired to print, and stretched out into the 'spiders'—known in this magazine—when essay societies were rare and prizes unknown. And then some of us grew too busy to write discursive essays, and we felt that our juniors might get into tighter harness with advantage. Lessons by correspondence, Local Examinations, Extension Lectures came up to carry on the work, and we found that we had done our share in preparing the ground for them. Most good things are started by personal influence, and one idle

'gosling' who signed herself 'Chelsea China' would certainly never have tried to improve her mind without such a stimulus.

Then how many young people were started on the line of work for others by the examples found on 'Cocksmoor' and 'Langley Common.' How many of these now, with that early fire by no means exhausted, are working on G.F.S. and C.O.S., and half the letters of the alphabet, meeting new problems, making new mistakes, but never forgetting that they learned, in girlhood, never to grudge education and development to any one on grounds of class or station; that for them the idea that the love of reading makes bad servants, or that Church principles imply indifference to general education, were always extinct bogies, which could never frighten Charlotte Yonge's pupils. From her, also, they learned to regard their scholars as individuals and not as masses, and to think nothing so interesting as the individual relations which they could establish with them.

We think she would rather hear it said that she and those who came under her influence were children together of the great Church movement, the great rush of new enthusiasm that filled her day, than that she was herself one of the movers in it. But there is no question that she helped to popularise it, rescued it from much that was ungenial and ungracious as applied to the home life of young women, and made religion romantic and doing right interesting.

The road of life is long, the narrow lane widens and twists, the hedges are clipped or broken down, all sorts of new vehicles come into vogue and race each other out of sight; but do not let us be in too great a hurry to say that a loop is a cross road, or that all have not the same invisible end in view, even when the beginning is shrouded in the mists of long ago.

We have spoken first, as seems right on such an occasion, of Miss Yonge's general work rather than of her literary fame; but she was, of course, well established as an author before the influences here spoken of came into play, and it is as a writer of fiction that she is best known to the world at large.

Her tales and novels have, so to speak, great sameness of environment: they represent people holding the same religious opinions, occupying pretty much the same position in society, and possessing much the same kind of culture. These surroundings are perfectly true to life within certain limits, but they were never universal or even very general; and therefore, while they

gave enormous force to the picture within those limits, they must more or less handicap it for those outside the charmed circle. The more they are taken for granted, the pleasanter is the picture; when the controversial touch comes in, the charm is broken. When this is absent the beauty of the conception of life, at any rate as one among others, is shown. Within these bounds, no author, in our opinion, ever possessed more power of various characterisation. She rarely repeats her personalities, and scarcely ever makes them into types. Her people differ from each other as much as the members of the various families in real life who live under her conditions differ, and though the similarity of views and circumstances has prevented the general recognition of this merit, we believe her greatest literary gift to be the power of creating a constant variety of personages whose *livingness* no one can deny, and whose *life-likeness* everybody who knows their circumstances will recognise. This criticism is not altogether inapplicable, even to the ideal heroes, who, as a rule, are not expected to have characters at all. Guy, Louis, Felix, differ much more from each other than most of the beloved beings who walk in a long procession after them to the Islands of the Blest. It is often said that they are too good to be true. If by this is meant that they cared too much about being good, the answer is that they were never intended to be commonplace, and that the letters published in such biographies as those of Arthur Hallam, Arthur Clough, Coleridge Patteson, Charles Kingsley, and of General Gordon, fully justify such moral earnestness. And if it is meant that their outlines are rounded and their angles softened, and that their trials and temptations are typical and selected, not always adequate to the feelings they evoke, what is this but to say that they dwelt in the golden land of youth, where we all lived once, and to which, if we could only get to 'Eden Gates, and softly scurry through,' when the Angel of Experience was looking another way, most of us would like sometimes to return.

Ethel May, Flora, the old doctor, Arthur Martindale, Countess Kate, Clement Underwood, and a host of others, are as definite and distinct as the characters in Miss Austen's novels, though it is quite true that their stories exact from their readers a more unusual view of life—hence their more limited recognition, but, for those who accept the view, their greater charm. Among these tales, perhaps 'Heartsease' and 'The Daisy Chain' appeal to the most universal sympathies. The characters in 'Scenes

and Characters at Beechcroft,' and in 'The Castle-Builders,' are brilliantly clear—were, indeed, so clear to their author, that she has constantly reproduced them, and has made for them a circle of their own, as Trollope created a county of Barset. In this circle their friends will always like to go and stay, and would hardly be surprised to find that an actual train would take them there. They find among them, as in all their fellows, the finest honour, the most delicate edges of reverence and refinement, —'The Christian Year' in action.

Miss Yonge's historical tales stand almost alone. They have had few successful imitators, and it is a little hard to say in what their individuality consists. They present, of course, a softened and idealised picture of the period described; but the illusion is never broken, no false note is struck—the people all move in their own atmosphere, and yet seem natural and alive. There is no pedantry, no sense of the surroundings having been got up, the people are never costume models—and yet the details are accurate, and the feelings of the past time effectively given. 'The Dove in the Eagle's Nest' and 'The Little Duke' are, in our opinion, her chief successes in this field. The former is painted with strong as well as delicate colour, appeals to the widest sympathies, and is infinitely picturesque and charming; the latter set a new fashion of writing for children, and must always be the delight of those who read it in early childhood. Among the many brilliant studies in these historical tales, Peregrine, the Reputed Changeling; and Hal the Jester, in 'The Armourer's Prentices' are among the most striking.

Miss Yonge's stories of village life have, to our thinking, so much literary merit that it has sometimes seemed almost a pity that they are so thoroughly suitable for parochial literature that their fidelity to nature has been hardly recognised beyond its limits. Some of them are village idylls of a perfect kind, the types most true and vivid, and the whole range of village life—from the old unlettered peasant in his smock frock, to his smart and intelligent young grandson in fashionable tweeds—from 'Langley School' to 'Founded on Paper' show admirable work, and trace, as nothing else does, the development of the Victorian Age—let us note, without the smallest grudge towards it, or that melancholy harking back to the smock frock with which we are too familiar. We all ought also to owe much to the respectful and kindly pictures of superior servants, from the homely old nurse to the grand ladies'-maid, which these

books have given us, pictures entirely devoid of patronage, caricature, or class distaste.

We have left no space to dwell either on the historical studies, which have so much of the charm of the historical tales, on the biographies which, like Mrs. Oliphant's, owed so much to the power of realising and presenting personal character, nor of the various manuals for teaching purposes. Some of these educated admirable Sunday school teachers, and if they could be presented to the public in a more attractive and available form than they wore in the rather repellent pages of the old 'Monthly Paper,' would in our opinion still be the best in existence.

We have spoken of limitations; which of us can see beyond our own? Within them let us strive to see true, and to see clear, and to tell what we see without fear or favour. Let our limit be the sense of our deep responsibility to Him who gave us eyes to see His works, and brains to use in His service. Then shall we be of use in our day and in our degree, and true 'Charlotte Yonge scholars,' even if other teachers also give us our lessons, and we say some of them in other schools. We shall have learned from her the vast importance of saying them *well*, and the greatest reverence for the Master who sets them all.

CHRISTABEL COLERIDGE.

NOTE.—Donations, either large or small (cheques and postal orders to be crossed), may be paid to the 'Charlotte Yonge Scholarship' Fund, at the London and County Bank, Winchester (or at any branch of this bank), or to the Hon. Treasurer, the Rev. J. M. Merriott, Dormy Cottage, Winchester.

'ESMÈ STUART' (*Hon. Sec.*).

Witham Close,
Winchester.

WOMEN'S PUBLIC WORK.

V.—THE QUESTION OF THE SUFFRAGE.

IT is impossible to dwell long upon the various aspects of public work with which women are concerned without the question forcing itself upon our minds: Should the Parliamentary vote be denied to them? Perhaps half against our will, we find ourselves considering the reasons for and against granting it, and asking what prospect those who work for it have of gaining it, and what would be the probable consequences of its possession.

Though the historical side of the question seems of comparatively little importance, yet there is no doubt that at one time certain women did exercise electorate rights in England. In the time of Edward I. four abbesses were summoned by writ to Parliament, in right of their abbeys. In the time of Henry III. and Edward IV. the Abbesses of Shaftesbury, Barking, St. Mary of Winchester and Wilton, were summoned to Parliament. At a later period the form of the writ was altered so as to direct the dame to whom it was addressed to appoint her lawful proxy, and under Edward III. nine peeresses thus chose and named their representatives. Women acted as high sheriffs, marshals, and justices of the peace, and sat on the bench at the assizes; nor have we any record that the consequences of their so doing were disastrous. The Countess of Dorset became hereditary High Sheriff of Westmoreland in 1643, and sat in that character with the judges of the assize at Appleby. That this lady was no cipher there remains a letter to testify, which she wrote, when a gentleman was urged upon her too peremptorily by the Secretary of State as candidate for one of her boroughs: 'I have been bullied by a usurper, I have been neglected by a court, but I will not be dictated to by a subject. Your man shan't stand.—ANNE DORSET, PEMBROKE and MONTGOMERY.'

From the time of Henry IV. the county court, where the elections were held, seems to have been attended by women as

well as by men, and in the days of great Elizabeth women availed themselves freely of their civic and political rights, though not to the extent that the queen thought desirable. She is said to have reproached the women of Kent with neglecting their privileges; that the use of these began to fall into abeyance is evident, and there was probably little strong feeling in the matter to oppose to Sir Edward Coke's authority when, in 1620, he pronounced against the political freedom of women, a dictate which is constantly quoted as adequate proof of their legal incapacity, under the common law of England, to hold and enjoy political rights, though there seems no reason why this unsupported and arbitrary judgment should have been accepted as final. But though women's voting fell into disuse and was practically disallowed, no actual statutory recognition of their incapacity barred their ancient electoral rights until 1832, when, in the new Reform Bill, the use of the words 'male person' deliberately excluded women. This limitation was considered necessary by the fact that women were just beginning to concern themselves anew with the question of their privileges; four thousand claimed the right to vote, and two test cases were submitted to the Court of Common Pleas, where four judges decided that a woman is legally incapacitated by sex from Parliamentary voting, and that the word 'man' does not include woman in matters affecting the franchise as it does in all other legal enactments.

The movement in favour of women's suffrage may be said to have fairly begun as soon as the ancient constitutional right was formally rescinded. In 1867, while it was still in its infancy, it was introduced into the House of Commons by Mr. John Stuart Mill, who, it is said, was the only man who could have brought forward the claim without exciting universal ridicule. Even he scarcely expected to find a single supporter, but to his surprise seventy-three members followed him into the lobby. Since that time the Bill has been regularly presented to the House almost every year, and has found able supporters. Its fortunes have varied, but the majority against it has gradually lessened, until in 1897 the second reading passed in a House of 393 members by a majority of 73, almost exactly the number of its total vote on its first appearance. Its opponents have been prompt to aver that this success was only due to members being sure it would never go any further, that they were intimidated by their lady friends, or too good-natured, or that no one suspected so

many others would support it, with other reasons, more creditable to their hearts than their heads; but the actual fact of the majority remains as an example of the great difference made by twenty years in the position of the movement, and a division which included the names of Mr. Balfour, Mr. Lecky, Sir John Lubbock, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Haldane, Mr. George Wyndham, and 208 other gentlemen of varying shades of opinion, cannot be set aside as of no significance.

Outside Parliament, women have been steadily working year after year. In 1872 the first Society for the Promotion of Women Suffrage was formed, with Mrs. Fawcett at its head. In 1888 a portion of this split off, consisting of members holding more advanced views and wishing to affiliate other political associations. The two are now working hand-in-hand, and will probably come together again in the future. Petitions have been presented to the House of Commons from time to time, and in 1896 a monster one was signed by 235,832 women.

In recent years great strides have been made in legislation specially affecting women, and many crying grievances have been in great measure redressed. In 1837 Lord Brougham said that the laws concerning them were in such a bad state that he dared not amend one of them, because if they were once meddled with he believed that the whole vile structure would crumble away. At that time a wife could not hold any property that came to her by any means whatever. Her husband could desert her and leave her to struggle alone in the world; but if she succeeded in making a livelihood he might pounce down upon her and demand her savings, and that again and again. She had no rights over her own child. 'The law does not see the mother; it sees only the father of the child,' were the words of a great judge. The husband, without giving any reason, might take the babe from the mother's breast, or send her young daughter to be brought up by strangers. As late as 1872 Lord Coleridge declared that if the House of Commons was as much aware as every lawyer of the state of the law of England as regards women, it would hesitate to say whether it was more worthy of a civilised than a barbarian state.

In 1870 the first Act was passed, giving married women the control of their property, and by this Act about thirty millions of money annually was transferred from the control of men to that of women. The right of mothers to the guardianship of their children up to the age of sixteen has been recognised by

law; nor can husbands now force their wives to live with them. But there are still many points in which the law requires amendment. To give one only: A wife who elects to leave her husband for unfaithfulness on his part cannot claim her children without legal procedure entailing expenses which to many are prohibitory. It is maintained that the actual redress of grievances goes less to prove how well women are represented by their natural protectors than that God helps those who help themselves; and that these changes coincide with the agitation for a political status, and that though laws have not been deliberately made in the past with the intention of oppressing women, yet by their having no voice in the making of them they had gradually become a monument of the evil theory of inequality.

Granting, however, that there is now every appearance that men are studying women's claims to justice with sympathy, and wish, in a generous spirit, to redress every wrong; women can still base their claim to a voice in the councils of the nation on the much wider ground that *all* laws are of as much consequence to them as to men, and that they are not merely interested in those which can inflict special injustice upon them. The lives of men and women are so inextricably bound up that any legislation which can affect the one without striking at the other is almost unthinkable, upon any broad lines. The Education Act was of as much consequence to mothers as to fathers, to girls as to boys; the Employers Liability Act deals with the possibility of accident to hundreds and thousands of working women as well as working men, and touches every working man's wife. All the enactments bearing on municipal life, on the care of the poor, on the remedy of abuses, are of equal importance to the daily well-being of both sexes.

We may examine shortly the chief objections which have been made in recent debates against extending the suffrage to women, and the arguments in its favour. A great outcry has been raised against the 'shrieking sisterhood,' a title which has done good service to the opponents of women's political claims, and which has not been wholly undeserved. Those claims, unluckily, contrived to identify themselves for some time with a set of women who, while loudly condemning men, rather illogically affected masculine manners and customs. The phase was an unreal one, and in passing away it is depriving antagonism of one of its dearest object lessons; but there is

now something almost hysterical in the alarm expressed by certain members of Parliament at the approach of what they profess to regard as a national disaster, and the sober-minded man or woman questions sceptically how much they believe of their own prophecies.

The physical disability of women to bear arms, the loss of natural influence they would suffer, the hardening and unsexing effect of contact with public life, and the absence of any real desire in the mass of women to possess the vote are all favourite arguments. We are told that their sphere is in the home, and that the country will suffer from their leaving it to rush into politics, or from politics bringing discord into the home. That they are unfit to exercise the privilege, impulsive, emotional, and without any sense of proportion, and have a tendency to fall under undue influence, such as that of clericalism or socialism, and that women are incapable of being good and trustworthy citizens. That all the material framework of society, buildings, railroads, ships, all the laborious part of the world's work is carried on by men, who ought, therefore, also to do the governing. That those who rock the cradle rule the world, and that this part of woman's work is so important and laborious that she should on no account be distracted from it. (These two last contentions seem to answer one another.) Perhaps the most potent argument is that women outnumber men in the country, and that though the franchise might, at first, only be extended to female tax-payers, we must look on to the time when it would be conceded on the same terms as men have obtained, with the result that the electorate would be swamped and the destinies of the country would be placed in feminine hands.

Of all theories, the one of physical disability, the contention that force is the last argument, and that those who cannot fight a country's battles have no right to a voice in making her laws, seems the most far-fetched. If carried into practice, it would disfranchise old men and cripples and large numbers of weakly citizens, who, even in the case of invasion, would be hardly more capable than women of rendering efficient service. In the case of war, women like men, would have their taxes raised, and the calamities of war fall with perhaps heavier force upon the former. Physical force is of comparatively little significance in our present elaborate and complicated form of society, whatever it may have been in the primitive stages of government. And while men are giving their lives for their country, are not

women in all ranks risking their lives day by day, ay, and losing them, to give the country her sons and daughters! 'It is a greater thing to bear soldiers than to bear arms.'

It is true that there are millions of women who do not want to vote, or who know nothing at all about it. Thousands who have got all they want, and who, being content with their own natural influence, forget that the hard lot of numbers of women is made yet harder by their indifference. On the other hand, while no one knows the exact proportion of women who desire the franchise, it is certain that a large number of educated and intelligent women have been active in demanding it, and if it can be proved to be a just demand in itself, it seems unjust to deny what would be an optional right to those who do want it, upon the ground that there are others who are indifferent to it. It is not easy to say how those who do want the vote, and who admittedly number several hundred thousand, could have manifested their desire more strongly than they have done. When the agricultural labourers got the franchise in 1885, no very strong evidence of their desire to posses it was before the country, and the cry was raised that the labourers, as a body, had shown no such desire. It is very difficult to awaken people to any keen interest about a matter in which they have no direct action, and which they do not feel sure will ever effect them at all. Voters who have been recently enfranchised are generally slow in making use of these opportunities, but examination of the use made by women of the vote in municipal affairs shows that they vote in something like the same proportion as men do.

The suffrage would be dearly bought if its possession destroyed the home and deprived women of the influence with which nature has endowed them. To them has indeed been given the charge of the home, but in proportion as they are good economists, wise, just, and industrious, it may be argued that they will bring these excellent qualities to bear upon political questions, and it hardly seems likely that the exercise every five years or so of the voting power will make any appreciable difference in their conduct of home affairs. The more one examines the danger of husband and wife holding different political opinions, the less likely does it seem that this would be a common one. The majority of married people have their interests in common, and probably diversity of politics would not be more frequent than diversity of religion now is. To quarrelsome families it might supply an additional bone of

contention, but these will always find food for disagreement, and it does not matter much whether the vote or the weather supplies it. Those who tremble for women's influence over the opposite sex may be consoled by the reminder that Dame Nature yields her easy triumphs to no legislation, however insidious, and that she who is endowed by that autocrat cannot be deprived of her power by others. Women will always retain enough real weakness to content the man's nature and the desire for service, though the assumed weakness of mind and body, the ignorances, the affected fears, the exaggerated helplessness and incapacity encouraged in the past and thought to be pleasing to men, may be at a discount. That these are declining is not due to any demand for the suffrage, but to the fact that in every class the pressure of social conditions has forced women out of the seclusion of the home, into a sphere of more active work and wider aims.

Though so much misgiving is expressed at the loss of feminine delicacy and refinement, which the exercise of the suffrage would entail, we find each party in practice, vieing with the others in its eagerness to call the women within its ranks to come forward and work for what they believe to be the right side in politics. At one time it might have been said that the unwonted publicity entailed by electioneering was injuring womanly softness, but now that the novelty is over, and that women who speak or canvas no longer make themselves conspicuous by so doing, numbers have found the way to give efficient help in elections without departing from their ordinary demeanour, if indeed, they are not too keenly alive to the advantages afforded by pretty looks, charming manners, and becoming clothes. The ballot has obviated most of the unpleasant roughness of an election, and the County Council and other municipal polls give constantly recurring opportunities for practice. The old idea that women could not be trustworthy citizens can hardly have much force, now that they act as Poor Law Guardians, as chairmen of Parish Councils, and sit on School Boards and vestries. This capability of filling such positions needs no defence; not only have they done well, but almost without exception, whenever they have been elected, they have been distinguished for the aptitude and ability which they have displayed. More women are returned at every municipal election, and the places they gain on the poll shows how well they have secured the confidence of the public.

The contention that women are unfit to exercise political power by reason of their changeable, emotional temperament, is perhaps the most well-founded of the indictments brought against them. It is urged that a preponderance of female voters in a constituency might be a danger at times of crisis, when popular feeling runs high, as for instance when the issue of peace or war was in question. Though women have never reached the level of the greatest men in attainments or creations, probably none will deny that plenty of educated women compare favourably with men. They are not more indifferent than men to practical interests. They are not less alive to the moral aspect of affairs. They are not more under the dominion of the lower passions, or more inclined to overthrow established order, and they may claim to have been trustworthy guardians of such public business as has hitherto come into their hands. An hon. member has declared that the possession of a vote by women is 'against nature,' that the refusal to grant it is based upon common sense, and that the contention in itself is absurd, and that for women to meddle with Parliamentary elections is as ridiculous as for men to engage in the occupations of women. These are fine phrases, but it is not easy to say what they mean, and the speaker did not attempt to show that they meant anything, or to point out what is the occupation in which men could by any possibility engage, which they would find it out of the question to perform satisfactorily if they chose, however little it might be in accordance with custom. And yet one must admit that the wives and daughters of the less educated classes are behind their husbands and mothers in political knowledge and interest. They miss that experience of the world that is picked up in clubs and workshops, where current topics of the day are discussed. They do not read newspapers, or attend public meetings. On the whole, women need ballast, they are easily carried away and influenced by any person whose opinion or affection they value, and though the number of thinking women will certainly increase in the future, those who live by the heart rather than the head will still preponderate. In this country women are in a majority of about one million, and another distinguished legislator has drawn a lurid picture of the condition of England in the future, when manhood and womanhood suffrage shall be fairly established.

Judged by the varying results of general elections, the opinions of the male voter lack something of that immutable character

given by strong convictions. We are told that this accelerated 'swing of the pendulum' is the outcome of the restless age in which we live, and that the feminine nature is doubly quick to catch its spirit, and we are bound to ask ourselves what would happen if this changeful element were largely augmented, and to try to estimate what would be the course of events if women were enfranchised to-morrow on equal terms with men? Surely many persons have begun to discern the inevitable if prosaic answer to such a question; *it would make no difference at all.* The increased number of voters would indeed make the poll a longer and more cumbrous affair, but '*il faut qu'une porte soit ouverte on fermée;*' in other words, women will belong as do men, with the exception of a small number of faddists, to one or other of the great parties of the State. In politics as in religion, the vast majority of men adhere to the faith in which they were born and brought up, and women, scattered evenly through every class, will be equally bound by tradition, association, and class interest. Supposing the clergy or the socialists do possess the influence which has been ascribed to them, they will not affect the same women, and the one will counterbalance the other. It is conceivable that danger might arise in a Roman Catholic country, but here the Nonconformist would be weighed against the Church. It is a mistake to look upon women as a class. They are a component part of every class of society, and are quite unlikely to overweight the scales on one side or the other, as we might have predicted that the artisan or the agricultural labourer would do. To which ever side at an election a woman gave her support she would do it in company with hundreds and thousands of men, and it would indeed be 'against nature' to speak as if they could under any conceivable circumstances array themselves *en bloc* against the men to whom they cling, and on whose guidance the mass of them will always rely, in this as in other situations in life. We can fancy a few 'advanced' women here and there forming an Independent Female Party, with perhaps a lady candidate to champion, but those who believe they would receive any widespread support from their own sex know little of the genus femina.

And to push the question to extremes, we are sometimes told that we must face the ultimate prospect of ladies in Parliament, and the vision of a 'Lady High Admiral' or a 'Speakeress' is flourished before us, to startle and to shock. But let us recollect, before we allow ourselves to be scared, that,

granting that a woman may press for the right to sit in Parliament, as did the abbesses of the fourteenth century, she would have to be elected by a mixed constituency, like any other candidate. Women have no such partiality for their own sex as would insure her their solid vote, and if any woman could so impress a majority of voters of both sexes with her ability and value as to induce them to return her as their representative, she would probably deserve the distinction, and her presence in the House of Commons bring no destruction on that assemblage of all that is wisest, most intelligent, and farseeing in the country.

It may be queried why we urge the advisability of granting what we believe will bring no marked change into political affairs, which will neither introduce chaos nor herald the millenium, and which, while it would add one hundred and forty thousand votes of women, farmers, and graziers, to the agricultural interest, would equally augment the influence of towns and professions. The answer is that the acquisition will add to the moral dignity of the individual, and will tend to raise the status of woman in every class. The vote would be looked upon by thousands of women now, and by many more as time went on, not as a selfish means to the gaining of their own ends, but as a sacred responsibility, quickening their interest in questions affecting the individual or the nation, and giving them a sober and legitimate influence, based on reason, and independent of the hazard of natural gifts or worldy position. Those who know the industrial classes well, know how common it is for the wife and mother to sink into the unregarded drudge of the family, and will understand how such a recognition would tend to give her the dignity and consideration which ought to be hers, but which she often lacks the strength to preserve. Is it too much to claim for women that they are more apt than men to carry a religious spirit into the affairs of everyday life, and to make practical details a matter of conscience? The political vote has proved again and again to be a great educator, and the country cannot but benefit by any force at work in its midst which is calculated to widen the outlook and dignify the lives of a large portion of the population. Anything that tends to improve women must, in the long run, raise their social and economical position, and so in the end lessen undue and unfair competition with men. That it will secure closer attention to their peculiar interests is very possible, and it may

even conduce to more advanced official positions than those which women by their own efforts have already occupied.

These words have been written as though an extension of the suffrage was claimed for women on the same lines as men. We must be prepared to deal with what we are constantly told is the ultimate certain result of a small present concession. At the same time this country has the excellent tradition of advancing slowly, and when the experimental step of enfranchising women of property commends itself to many who do not as yet see their way beyond, it seems extremely foolish to hazard all reputation for moderation and to depart from old precedent, by loudly claiming a sweeping measure, and noisily playing the part of new brooms which, without delay, are to brush away every disability. If the smallest franchise is granted to women, and if it proves a success, they may be sure that it will be gradually widened, and that each successive demand will be more easy to press.

And yet it would be rash to prophesy that female suffrage will become a fact within a reasonable time. The cause numbers some of the most distinguished men in the country among its supporters, and if thinking men and large-minded men only were its antagonists their conversion might be not unhoped for, but it has a far stronger foe to fight than reasonable distrust and genuine objection. The great mass of men like power. It is putting it coarsely to say that 'we have got the upper hand and we'll keep it,' represents their attitude, but none the less certainly is it the root feeling which, if the country were canvassed to-morrow on this question, would send back a sweeping majority, pledged to resist women. It is much the same impulse as that which dictated the defeat of feminine claims at the universities. Nor is it altogether to be wondered at. The average man has no very definite expectation of achieving superiority by his own efforts, and it might be imprudent to abandon what he must regard as a sort of providential hall-mark of his wisdom and power of government. We come to the conclusion that women cannot go on better than they are doing, firmly pressing their cause on the one hand; on the other, justifying it by proving their capability for self-government, and by making the arguments in their favour more unanswerable. No such work is wasted. It is the contest that strengthens, rather than the prize.

EVELYN MARCH-PHILLIPPS.

OFF THE HIGH ROAD:

THE STORY OF A SUMMER.

BY ELEANOR C. PRICE, AUTHOR OF 'IN THE LION'S MOUTH,' 'YOUNG DENYS,' 'MISS LATIMER OF BRYANS,' ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

A REAL PRINCESS.

'Crowd her chamber with your sweets:
Not a flower but grows for her!
Make her bed with linen sheets
That have lain in lavender.'

JESSIE felt quite tired after the exertion of talking Joseph Arnold out of his uncomfortable humour, and the sensation of having done her best to deceive him, not without success, was far from being pleasant to a loyal mind and an affectionate heart. She told herself, as she walked slowly back to the house, that nothing could have been more unfortunate than his presence that afternoon, before she had had time to make her mother understand anything, except that their guest's homeless condition was her own choice, and that she had some good reason for hiding herself. Who was to be trusted, after all, if not Joseph Arnold, to whom she had promised her whole life, and in whose honesty of purpose she believed as in her own? yet even to him, as she had felt instinctively, it was impossible to betray the strange confidence that had been given to her. She consoled herself by thinking that by-and-by she would explain to her new friend how good and clever Joseph was, and how she cared for him, and how certain it was that any secret would be safe with him.

She quickened her pace before reaching the house, as all the new responsibilities, and the wonderful charm which had laid hold upon her, seemed to reassert their claim. She ran through

the courtyard and into the kitchen, where her mother was sitting alone by the fire with an anxious countenance.

'Oh, mother, where is she?'

'I've shown the young lady to her room,' Mrs. Downes replied gravely. 'And now I'll be obliged to you, Jessie, if you'll sit down in that chair and tell me the meaning of all this. Are the police after her? Of course I wasn't going to put them on the scent through Joseph, but I mean to know the whole truth myself, or as much of it as she has told you. I've been looking again at that advertisement, and it does seem stranger than ever that such as her should have put it in.'

'Yes, we thought it was some poor widow, didn't we? Were not you amazed when you saw her, mother? Did you ever see anybody like her in all your life before?'

'She is a very beautiful young lady, with elegant manners. I'm charmed with her, of course,' said Mrs. Downes. 'But that's nothing to the purpose. The question is, what has she been doing to get herself into a mess?'

'Nothing wrong, as you can see in her face!' cried Jessie.

'It ain't always quite safe to judge by faces. However, I feel as if you were right. Begin at the beginning and tell me all about it.'

Jessie was not a very quick or artistic teller of a story, and her mother interrupted her with a good many questions.

No. 50, Crossway Street, had turned out to be a small toy and fancy-shop, kept by a blind woman and her daughter, a girl of fifteen. They also let very quiet little lodgings to one or two women with employments in the town. When Jessie Downes had inquired for 'M.,' the mistress of the shop had at first shaken her head and appeared to know nothing, but her daughter told her Miss Field had said that if any letters came addressed to 'M.,' they were for her. No letters had come, however.

'It's all right, I think. It was an advertisement,' said Jessie.

'Oh, she's been advertising, has she?' said the blind woman. 'For a situation, I suppose. Well, she's a nice young lady, and has got no home, she says. I don't know, I'm sure—it seems funny. Would you like to see her, ma'am? but from her voice I expect she may be rather above your place.'

Jessie was obliged to stop and laugh when she came to this point.

'Well, go on,' said Mrs. Downes, impatiently.

The young girl led the way upstairs, and Jessie asked her as they went whether this Miss Field was a real lady. The girl said she dressed that plain, one couldn't feel sure, but her manners was very pleasant and she gave no trouble in the house, except liking to keep to herself and neighbour with nobody. She had been there four days. Then the door of the little back room opened, and Jessie found herself in the presence of the person 'in serious trouble, homeless and friendless,' who had roused her own and her mother's pity in that morning's newspaper.

They had sat together for an hour, during which Jessie listened to a story that seemed almost too long, and too marvellous in all its details, to tell her mother now. At the end of that time Miss Field packed her few possessions in a small bag, went downstairs with Jessie and paid for her lodging.

'Well, ma'am,' the blind woman had said, while her daughter stared with all her eyes, 'I wasn't aware you had been advertising. I hope you've heard of something to suit you. Are you going out of town, may I ask?'

'Yes, far away into the country. I think it will suit me very well, thank you,' Miss Field replied.

'Ah! well, I hope you'll give equal satisfaction.'

'She said "I hope so,"' said Jessie to her mother, 'and you should have seen how she looked at me. So we came off to the station—it was lucky I'd done my shopping beforehand,—and she talked all the way in the train, for we were alone, and when I'd got the trap she asked if she might drive, and Fidget did fly along, mother.'

'Oh, I dare say!' said Mrs. Downes, a little discontentedly. 'I hope she didn't over-drive the poor beast.'

'He liked it,' said Jessie. 'He threw up his head and picked up his feet and trotted along like a five-year-old. She knows how to drive, and that makes all the difference.'

'This is all very well,' said Mrs. Downes, after a minute's thought. 'But you haven't yet made clear to me why she ran away from home.'

The truth was that the confidence of Jessie's new friend seemed almost too great, too fresh, to be poured out at once to any other person. And there was a difficulty which had not presented itself in the first enthusiastic moments. Miss Field, understanding at once the sort of woman she had to deal with,

had told Jessie her whole story, absolutely and without reservation, though under one condition—that to nobody, not even to her mother, should she tell quite everything as it was told to her. It seemed then to Jessie that it would be easy to keep silence entirely on the one or two points that Miss Field wished to leave unmentioned and unknown, and she willingly promised all that was asked of her. But now she found herself almost afraid to speak at all, for fear of letting out something dangerous.

'Well, mother, as I was telling you, she is an orphan without brothers or sisters, and she has two guardians who are no relations. They wanted her to marry some one she didn't like, at least to promise that she would, and they almost ill-treated her and locked her up in a room because she wouldn't. They have a right to take charge of her and manage all her affairs till she is of age, and that won't be just yet. The servants were in their pay, and they kept such a watch that she couldn't make friends outside, and she was most dreadfully plagued and miserable. So the first thing she thought of was, to get away to an old aunt who lives in the Channel Islands; so she slipped out at night and walked across country to a station, but when she got there she thought she wouldn't go to her aunt after all, for she had often talked in joke of running away to her, and she knew they would follow her straight and bring her back again, as they had a right to do. So she thought she really would try to be lost, and she took the train that went the other way, and travelled all that night and most of the next day till she came to Manningham. She saw it was a large place, and so——'

'And so, Mrs. Downes,' the stranger's voice broke in, like a strain of sweet music, oddly discordant with Jessie's broad Midland accent, 'she thought surely those rows on rows of houses, with roofs all alike, and a good thick canopy of smoke over all, would hide one poor creature from its enemies.'

She had come so lightly across the floor that both women started when they saw her standing close to them, her hand on Jessie's shoulder.

'Please to sit down, ma'am,' said Mrs. Downes, rising from her own chair.

'I would rather be called "my dear,"' said the girl. She sat down between them, leaned her elbows on the table, and let her eyes wander all round with slow enjoyment. 'How lovely this

is!' she said. 'But you are not so very lonely. Jessie told me, I think, that there were no houses near; but I can see walls and chimneys from my window beyond the trees, beyond that perfectly beautiful orchard. It looks like a large house, with gardens and avenues, and all sorts of things of that kind.'

'Yes,' said Mrs. Downes; 'that is Stepford Hall. Our landlord lives there, poor gentleman, with his only son. But we don't call them neighbours, exactly.'

There was a touch of anxiety as well as of amusement in her kind eyes as she looked at the girl, for it now occurred to her for the first time, what would Mr. Edwin say to this result of Jessie's mission? Her thoughts had been so taken up with the arrival that she had forgotten his interest in it. The words came back to her, 'Do angels advertise in the *Manningham Post*, I wonder?' with which, two or three hours before, he had answered her suggestion about 'angels unawares.'

'Nobody that I need see, then,' said the stranger, relieved.

'As to that——' Mrs. Downes began, but checked herself. 'And what did you do, ma'am—my dear—when you got out at Manningham? How did you hear of those lodgings?'

'I did not hear of them. I walked along one or two streets, thinking that I might come to some very quiet hotel, and then, as I passed the little toy-shop, I saw "Apartments" on a card in the window. So I went in and asked, and they took me without any more trouble. I thought it was a very safe place; but by the evening of the second day I did not like it so much. I love fresh air, and there was none in the streets; and when I went out, even if I had a thick veil on, people seemed to look at me. So I composed that advertisement, which I thought would touch somebody's heart in some very quiet place in the country. And isn't it wonderful that I should have got exactly, exactly, what I wanted? I can go out in these nice fields and lanes without the fear of meeting anybody. But now, before I feel quite at home, I want to come to a clear understanding with your mother, Jessie. You don't imagine, Mrs. Downes—the advertisement seems to have made that impression on Jessie, but it was quite a false one—I mean, you did not think that I was asking you to give me this shelter for nothing?'

'Well, ma'am,' said Mrs. Downes, smiling as she met the girl's eyes, 'we certainly thought the advertiser was poor as well as friendless. And really you needn't trouble about it. Jessie and I have enough for ourselves and for you too.'

'But that is impossible, Mrs. Downes. I don't think you quite understand——'

'If I don't understand, I can guess that a young lady who has run away from her guardians has not too much to spend on her own keep. Listen to me, my dear, and do not argue, if you please. I'm not at all sure whether I am doing a right thing in the eyes of the law, in keeping you here at all; but I am sure of this, that I won't be paid for doing so. Jessie and I are ready to give you every help we can. We can't look in your face without being sure that you are telling us the truth, and that you felt it really necessary to escape from those unworthy guardians of yours. You may reckon on us as your friends, and it is as my guest that I will keep you here as long as you like to stay.'

The stranger, flushing deeply, with her eyes full of tears, leaned forward and laid her hand on Mrs. Downes's.

'It may be all the summer,' she said; 'it may be till I am of age—in the autumn. But you must let me repay you then. Think—I have no claim on you whatever.'

'We will see about it then, if you can afford it, and if you have put me to any special extra expense,' replied Mrs. Downes, calmly.

The stranger looked at Jessie, and both girls smiled.

'Your mother is a wonderful woman,' she said; 'but after her presence of mind in introducing me to your friend Mr. Arnold, I might have expected anything.'

Jessie Downes had all the generosity and romance of her mother's character, without so much of the lively and humorous good sense which made Mrs. Downes doubly attractive. It was with real delight, that evening, that she waited on the guest who had so strangely come to the Farm. She recognised at once all the needs that would be felt by this creature from another world, and felt with an odd sensation of pathos how miserable she must have been in that wretched little lodging. She had already changed the sheets on the old chintz-curtained bed to the very oldest and finest her mother possessed, and with her own hands she brought a pile of the best towels, and carried up quantities of hot water. When Miss Field came upstairs, weary and pale, to the clean, quaint bedroom, with its sloping roof, Jessie was standing with a distressed face in the middle of the floor.

'Now what is it, you dear kind person? Haven't you done

enough for me?' said the other girl, laying both hands on her shoulders, and looking with 'those eyes,' as Mrs. Downes for ever called them, deep into Jessie's own.

'Oh—I've done nothing. It's only that—I'm so sorry, but there's no scented soap in the house.'

'What do you take me for?'

'Why, a real princess, to be sure,' said Jessie, smiling.

'That is very nice of you, without having had time to put a pea under the mattress. Don't disturb yourself. I have everything I want—everything to make me happy. Liberty and peace; and how soundly I mean to sleep to-night! The noise kept me awake; I haven't really slept since I left home.'

Jessie was quite sure that a real princess must want a lady's maid, and the services she offered were accepted easily enough by the tired wanderer. The whole day had been to Jessie like a rather feverish dream, and part of this, not the least dreamlike, was to find herself brushing out Miss Field's long soft hair. In the course of this occupation she looked at the silver backs of the brushes, and presently showed them, with some hesitation, to their owner.

'Is it quite safe to have these lying about, if you don't want people to know——'

'Oh yes, quite safe,' said the fugutive, sleepily. 'Nobody will see them. People like your little maid, for instance, would be none the wiser. They were my mother's, and I like to use them. Don't be too sensible, Jessie.'

'It was for you—for your sake—that I thought——' murmured Jessie.

'Oh, I know. But don't disturb this lovely feeling of perfect security. If you frighten me, I shall have bad dreams. I shall see a vision of General Marston standing by the dressing-table with one of my brushes in his hand, and I shall hear him say, "Found at last! this is proof positive." There, put them away in the drawer, Jessie.'

Much later, Jessie stole upstairs again, and, after listening a minute at the stranger's door, softly turned the handle and went in. She set down her light in a shaded place, stepped very cautiously up to the bed and leaned over it. Her guest was breathing gently in a calm, childlike sleep, and as Jessie's eyes became used to the shadow, she could see how peaceful the face was, long dark lashes resting on the soft, faintly-flushed cheek. Jessie almost kissed a little cluster of curls that lay on the girl's

temple; but then she was afraid of waking her; and after a few minutes of silent wondering and watching, she went away as softly as she had come in. She did not quite know why she was a little sad that night; not, certainly, from any regret at what she had done, for she felt nothing but the most enthusiastic admiration for the 'real princess' she had rescued from her enemies. Mrs. Downes also went to bed rather gravely and silently. Both these good women knew that they had taken a great responsibility on themselves, and without the smallest wish to be rid of it, they might very naturally give an anxious thought to future consequences.

So the night closed on that eventful day at the Old Slang Farm.

CHAPTER V.

ANOTHER ADVERTISEMENT.

'There is a proclamation that you are vanished.'

THE strange guest woke very early the next morning, and realising with some difficulty where she was, got up and opened the window wide. She saw the sun, still low in the east, throwing long yellow gleams through the mists in the orchard, over the dewy, dazzling grass, while the trees, white and rose-flushed, lay in soft masses on a soft grey-blue sky. In the distance the daybreak flashed on the chimneys of Stepford Hall, which looked now like the gold turrets of some enchanted castle.

The tired girl dropped back into dreams again, from which she was presently roused by a great concert of birds, thrushes and blackbirds welcoming the day. Then the morning noises of the farm broke into the heavenly harmony of nature; men's voices, heavy feet tramping round the house, the opening and shutting of doors, pails clanking, and the rattle of chains at the well. Suddenly, as the guest lay awake in a delightful laziness, feeling herself shut out from the world she knew by a rampart of comfortable homely sounds, she was disagreeably startled by a different voice under her window, a voice which reminded her of that very world, and told her that, after all, she had not escaped from it so completely. It said, 'Good morning, Miss Jessie.'

'Good morning, Mr. Edwin. You're about early,' was the answer in Jessie's broad, steady tones.

Both speakers were in the garden under the window.

'Well, it is such a jolly morning, I thought I would walk round and see if you and Mrs. Downes were all right. I suppose she is not up yet?'

'No, not yet. She was rather late last night.'

'Was that your fault?' The pleasant young voice was half severe, half laughing.

'What do you mean, Mr. Edwin?' said Jessie.

'You must know what I mean. Didn't Mrs. Downes tell you that I was here yesterday afternoon, and that she showed me a certain advertisement?'

'Yes, she told me last night;' and Jessie was laughing in her turn.

'Do you know, I felt so anxious about that advertisement, that I thought of coming back in the evening to see what had happened. But I met Mr. Arnold coming here, so I knew you had some one to look after you.'

'It was kind of you to think of it, Mr. Edwin.'

'I suppose it was all nothing, wasn't it? Or a hoax, perhaps. Anyhow, I told Mrs. Downes you wouldn't be taken in. Was there really anybody? Did you see the advertiser? Was it a man? Mrs. Downes had never thought of that, till I suggested it to her.'

'Please don't ask so many questions, Mr. Edwin! You take one's breath away.'

'Oh, I'm very sorry. But that advertisement was really curious, and I can't get it out of my head.'

'Yes, it was curious,' said Jessie slowly. 'Mother said you would have to be told what came of it. We let Mr. Arnold think we had taken a lodger for the summer months; but as you saw the advertisement, you must know at least part of the truth. Only please let it go no further, Mr. Edwin. A lady came back with me yesterday who particularly wishes to be private, and mother and I have promised that she shall be so, as far as it lies in our power.'

The young man whistled; and there was such a length of dismay in the sound that the involuntary listener laughed, though at the same time she felt anxious and angry.

'By Jove! a lady! An old lady?'

'Oh no; not an old lady.'

At that moment, from some odd change in Jessie's voice, her guest was sure that she looked up at the open window and perceived what might be happening.

'I hear mother coming downstairs, Mr. Edwin. Will you look in and see her?'

'I'll just say good morning to her. But first, Miss Jessie, are you sure it's all right—that you haven't got hold of some adventurer? Forgive me, but you and Mrs. Downes have such awfully kind hearts, you know.'

'Don't fidget yourself,' answered Jessie, with something of her mother's placid dignity. 'It's all right, perfectly right, I assure you.'

'But it was a very queer advertisement, you know.'

After that the conversation passed out of hearing, for the two walked down the garden path and round the house together.

'I suppose "Mr. Edwin" is the landlord's son,' Miss Field reflected, when she was left to the birds and the distant farm noises. 'What a bore it is that one can't escape from people, even in the depths of the country. What a dreadfully interested young man! I suppose he has nothing else to do. Idle people always gossip. He had a nice voice, and a nice way of speaking. I wonder what his name is. I suppose the advertisement was rather queer, as he says—unusual, at any rate—however, it served its purpose. If he is as nice as his voice, he won't plague or pry much. He is a gentleman; not like that horrid creature yesterday. I really disliked that man, with his impertinent looks and questions. I'm sorry my nice Jessie is engaged to him. Mrs. Downes and Jessie are perfection. How tiresome everything is, and what a noise the birds make!'

Edwin Dampier, as he walked home, was graver and more thoughtful than ever. He was very much puzzled by Mrs. Downes's manner, and by the impression that the mysterious advertiser had made both on her and on Jessie. She said, 'We can trust you, Mr. Edwin;' but she told him nothing, except that this young lady, Miss Field, was at present without a home by no fault of her own, and that her wish was to spend a few months in perfect seclusion and privacy.

'It needn't surprise anybody,' said Mrs. Downes, 'that I should have taken a lady to lodge with us for the summer. It is a thing that many people do, and Jessie and I need not think ourselves above it. That is how I explained it to Joseph Arnold yesterday. He was here when Miss Field arrived.'

'Of course, that would be a very sensible thing to do. Only —there are such things as references,' Edwin murmured, looking on the floor, for there was something about Mrs. Downes that made a plain remonstrance difficult. 'If you had heard of her in any other way——. It really isn't a matter of charity, then, Mrs. Downes? One thought it was that, you know, from the very strange wording——'

'As we are old friends, Mr. Edwin, and as I was foolish enough to consult you yesterday,' said Mrs. Downes, with great coolness, 'I'll tell you that one of the first things Miss Field did was to ask me my terms.'

'And I hope you made them pretty stiff,' said Edwin.

Mrs. Downes took no notice of this.

'All I ask of you,' she said, 'is to mention the advertisement and the other circumstances to nobody—not even to the Colonel.'

'All right,' said Edwin; but he went away troubled, being quick enough to see that his old friend herself was far from easy in her mind.

He was still occupied in wishing the advertiser at Jericho when he turned into the hall at home, and found his father walking up and down there, in a state of upright, stern, self-controlled impatience.

'You are late, Edwin,' he said. 'It is twelve minutes to eight. If I cannot begin reading at the quarter, it throws out my whole morning.'

'I'm very sorry, sir. I wish you wouldn't wait for me.'

'Your duty is to be here,' his father said, ringing a bell sharply.

Four servants came into the hall, one of them, a solemn man, carrying a small table with books on it, which he set down in the middle of one of the great bearskins. Colonel Dampier, standing at this table, took up a Bible and opened it. The servants sat in the dim background of the hall, which was dark and chilly, even on this bright May morning. Young Edwin placed himself in one of the high-backed chairs nearer the door, and contemplated his wet boots, for the dew in the orchard was heavy.

Any light there was fell upon the Colonel as he stood there, his slim figure held very upright, his pale face, with the closely-cut white hair and moustache, looking like a mask in ivory. He began, rather slowly and monotonously, to read out of the Book of Joshua; but before he had read far in that chronicle of

battles his light eyes were gleaming, his voice took strange tones of passionate enthusiasm, and Edwin, as it often happened, found himself listening with entranced interest to something which stirred him for the moment like a march played on wind instruments to an army in the field. At times like these he understood his father, and knew why it was that the old soldier's one delight was to read of battles, and also why, for twenty years past, he had been absorbed in preparing that *History of Battles*, of which the manuscript lay in heaps about his work-room. He had thus returned to the chief interest of his younger days. A real return to active life had seemed impossible, but here he found some little consolation in the break-up of all his earthly happiness.

After shutting the book, Colonel Dampier paused for a moment, shading his eyes with his hand; then the little group knelt, and he read a few prayers, ending always with a short prayer of his own—

'O God of battles, fight Thou with those Thy soldiers who fight for righteousness in all the known and unknown worlds. Amen.'

That prayer was always something like a bugle-call, though it summoned the small family of Stepford Hall to such very dull and monotonous daily duties. Edwin could not see that it applied at all, in any way, to anything that he or the Colonel or the servants had to do. When not actually listening to the reading of Joshua, or any other warlike part of the Bible, he was inclined to think more of the blessings of peace. But this was a word that his father could hardly hear with patience; the vices of peace were far more odious to him than the horrors of war.

Colonel Dampier laid down his books and walked into the dining-room. As he did not spend much time here, he had not reduced it to the military simplicity of the room where he worked all day. Here the fine solid old furniture had its memories—not always very edifying—of Squire Dampier's dinner-parties; and stately portraits frowned down on the present master and his rather listless son.

They sat down together to a breakfast as plain and severe as if they were engaged in a campaign where supplies were difficult. The manservant brought in yesterday's *Times*—London papers did not reach Stepford till the second day, unless specially sent for—and laid it by his master's plate.

'Ten minutes past eight!' said the Colonel, when he was gone. 'It might be better to read at half-past seven. Impossible to work if one begins so late. Where have you been this morning?'

'I walked round by the Slang. I—well, I had a few minutes' talk with Mrs. Downes, and perhaps that delayed me.'

'Did you see the new person?'

Colonel Dampier, generally so absent, had a way now and then of hearing and knowing things for himself in the most unaccountable manner. The glance that now encountered Edwin's across the table was quite alarmingly wide awake, and he knew, to his annoyance, that he was changing colour under it.

'The new person?' he repeated. 'Oh—Mrs. Downes's lodger, you mean. No, I did not. How did you——'

'Locke thinks that Mrs. Downes has no right to let lodgings at the home farm without asking leave. He and Firkins are up in arms about it.'

'What nonsense! What harm can she do?'

'We are very exclusive at Stepford, you think? Well, Ned, rightly so. I cannot have one of these terrible modern women trespassing on my ground, perhaps sketching, perhaps bringing Stepford into a magazine article. You smile; you don't realise what a confounded bore it might be.'

'It might, of course,' Edwin agreed. 'But I think, sir, from what Mrs. Downes says, this is a very harmless person, who only wants to be quiet. Locke and Firkins must have had early news of her; she only arrived yesterday.'

'I understand that Hezekiah Gibbs brought the milk this morning, as the boy was employed otherwise.'

'And Hezekiah is injured, I suppose? He's not amiable.'

'I did not understand that. He told Firkins that Miss Jessie had brought home an uncommon pretty and pleasant young miss, with a pair of eyes as went right through you.'

Colonel Dampier's face relaxed slowly into one of his most unusual smiles. Edwin laughed.

'Well done Hezekiah! Poor old chap! That is a conquest worth something.'

'Possibly. But it proves that my fears are reasonable. It does not sound like a person whose first object is quiet Firkins has anything but that impression, let me tell you."

'Oh—Firkins'—muttered the young man.

'In any case,' said his father, after a minute's silence, 'I am inclined to agree with Locke and Firkins that Mrs. Downes had better not have done it. It is the thin edge of the wedge. No part of England is now sacred from these summer visitors. They are like mosquitoes.'

'Well, father, this lady, whatever she may be, is not likely to intrude on you.'

'I hope not. But the Old Slang is much too near for real safety. Till now, Mrs. Downes's discretion has been defence enough,' said the Colonel.

'I've no doubt it will be so still. Anyhow, she is not the sort of woman to be interfered with.'

There must have been some natural combativeness in Edwin's disposition, for he was now almost ready to champion Mrs. Downes and her lodger against the sour comments of his father's two old servants. Walking home just now, he had been angry with Mrs. Downes's foolishness, and had wished that new young woman and her advertisement anywhere. Now, without having seen her, some instinct was trying to drag him into the path of Hezekiah Gibbs, and the advertisement began to seem more pathetic and less preposterous. At the same time he wondered to himself what his father would have said to it.

The Colonel was in a hurry to go to his work. He looked through his *Times* quickly, handed it over to Edwin, and crossed the hall to the study without any further talk. The young man took the paper into one of the deep windows, full of sunshine, and sat down to read on the broad window-sill. Something on the first page caught his eyes almost immediately, and he found himself studying it with curious interest and attention.

'Disappeared from her home four days ago, a young lady, twenty years of age. Middle height, fair complexion, brown hair, and hazel eyes. Probably dark blue dress, felt hat, and checked cloak. Initials, *V. F.* Information to Messrs. Sharpe and Keane, Strand, who are empowered to offer a handsome reward.'

'Serious trouble—homeless and friendless—off the high road,' murmured Edwin.

The *Times* dropped on his knee, and for several minutes he sat plunged in thought. Then, with an impatient movement, he took up the paper again, turned it over and looked at the various news. But he ended by going back to the first page,

though by this time every word of the new advertisement was written on his brain.

'"*F*"—that stands for Field. If it is the same person, she has not taken the trouble to alter her name. "Particularly wishes to be private," they said. She won't be private long, if Hezekiah's tongue is set wagging, and if the servants here get things into their heads. I don't know, though. They have no reason to think she is anything but an ordinary lodger. They don't know the circumstances—the *Post* advertisement; luckily Mrs. Downes and Jessie have had the sense to keep that to themselves. I wish dear old Downes hadn't told me. It's uncomfortable—hang it all, it's no business of mine.'

Edwin jumped up and walked across the room, leaving the *Times* on the window-seat. Then he turned round and went back to it, took off the outside sheet, folded it, and stuffed it into his pocket. Then, with a resolute determination to think no more of the matter, he went out into the hall, took his hat, called Don, and marched away through the wet grass of the park towards the distant meadows.

CHAPTER VI.

STEPFORD HILL.

'How now!
Even so quickly may one catch the plague?'

'OH, he's a dreadful man, a dreadful man. Oh yes, he is!' sighed old Harry Holt.

The young squire had reached the Hill Farm towards twelve o'clock one day, after a long round through the meadows beyond the river. He had tramped through several bogs, for some of those thousands that Mr. Joseph Arnold talked about might very well have been spent on draining; he was almost too muddy to enter anybody's house, and he was flushed and tired with the bad walking, and with climbing the steep hill under a sun that was very hot for May. He had found matter for depression, too, in the state of the fences down there; they were going from bad to worse, and a hundred pounds would not by any means put them in order. Perhaps the farmers ought not to have expected much fencing when they paid their rents irregularly, or not at all; but they did expect it, and any

mischief that came from straying cattle was the landlord's fault in their eyes. Besides, it was not true economy to let an estate run to utter ruin. Edwin felt this keenly enough, but in the face of his father's bank-book he was powerless.

After one of these tramps round the property he generally felt more hopeless than usual, and less resigned. As he crossed the last broad slopes of the hilly field that lay below Harry Holt's farm, with his back to the valley and the river and the far blue view, he had been thinking what a pity it was, after all, that he could not have gone out into the world to make his own way, and earn his own living. Of course he loved the old place and the old fields. Yet—to have nothing better to look forward to than a life spent in walking round with Don and future collies at his heels, listening to complaints, worrying over farming details, arguing with tenants and always consenting, as far as possible, to what they wanted—for Colonel Dampier did not count a war with his tenants among righteous wars—with no young companions, with no horse to ride, nothing but the steady old mare that went to the station! Sometimes, as compared with other men's lives, the whole thing seemed almost incredible. His father simply thought it Edwin's duty, and troubled himself no further. Edwin cared very much for his father, and believed in duty; but the young sap would rise and fret sometimes, though the moss might be growing slowly and steadily over the stem of the tree.

Then he had been a good deal worried these last few days by the thought of Mrs. Downes and her mysterious inmate; and his studied avoidance of the Slang Farm, which seemed right under the circumstances, had made things no better. The longer he remained without seeing the stranger, the more she haunted his mind. Fortunately, no more gossip seemed to have reached his father, but new developments were always possible.

Then, to-day, the boggy holes and the ruinous fences had not been cheering, and the young master for once was not far from a fit of ill-temper when he opened Harry Holt's garden-gate and strode up between sweet borders of spring flowers to the old red cottage-like house, long and low, which crouched so snugly near the green crest of Stepford Hill.

But it always seemed to the gentle and fanciful side of Edwin's nature that the fiend himself could not have spoken roughly to old Harry Holt. He and his sister, some years older

than himself, kept house together in a quaint, old-fashioned, peasant way on the small farm where their forefathers had lived as long as the Dampiers at the Hall. Harry's wife had died in the same year as Mrs. Dampier: they had no children, so it seemed that he would be the last Holt of Stepford Hill.

There the two old people sat at their early dinner, under low rafters comfortably hung with bunches of herbs and sides of bacon. Harry had a rosy little face, bright blue eyes, and white hair curling all over his head; he was like a nice old doll. Miss Maria, as the village called her, was taller than her brother, and very thin, with a long nose and a black poke bonnet. She always wore this and her spectacles, and had a character for severity, book-learning, and extravagance. She was also thought proud and silent, her brother being the greatest chatter-box in Stepford.

Old Harry went on munching his dinner and telling his grievances in a cheerful sort of way, rather like a robin chirping over crumbs. Miss Maria opened her mouth to reprove him for not showing more politeness to the young squire, but Edwin begged her to oblige him by following her brother's example, on which she helped herself to another potato, and said no more.

'Master Edwin don't mind, he don't,' said the old man, chuckling. 'The real gentry likes you to go on with your business and be natural; they likes you to feel they're not putting you out when they calls at dinner-time. Then it comes to pass that your manners is as good as theirs, you see, Maria. She always says I'm such a Radical. She says so; she knows politics, but I don't. She says if I weren't a Radical I'd be a better and a richer and a happier man. But it's she as spends the money, Mr. Edwin. If so be as I'm out at elbows, she'll get me a new coat or starve for it. That's how I come to go about so smart. Why, my coat as hangs on that nail is a better coat than the one on your back, Mr. Edwin.'

'Well, Harry—I don't know—I believe it easily might be.'

'I tell her I ought to be paying my rent more punctual, instead of strutting about in new coats,' said Harry, with his head on one side. 'And what d'ye think she says, sir? She says money's a fictitious business at the best, and the coins make a better show on my back than they would in Colonel Dampier's pocket. She says it'll be all the same a hundred years hence, when he and I both is beyond the use of coin. I

tell her that may be so, but it wouldn't have been the same forty or fifty years back. The old squire made us pay up sharp, and then spent the money in rattling style. Perhaps 'twas better for the country, though not for me.'

'Your brother is a bad old man, Miss Maria,' said Edwin.

'Oh, don't talk about him; he's chronic!' replied Miss Holt with a grim smile.

'The Colonel understands me, and Master Edwin understands me,' Harry went on, with an almost pathetic look in his bright eyes. 'I know when I've got good landlords, and I ain't going to throw them away. If I paid my rent regular like other people, they might say, "This is a fine farm; it wants a youngster to work it;" and they might turn me out and put some scientific sort of a sprig in my place.'

'If we understand you, it seems you don't understand us,' said Edwin, smiling.

'How the man does talk, mercy on us!' muttered Miss Maria, over her plate.

'You don't look cheery this morning, Master Edwin, said Harry. 'Come nearer the fire, sir; the dog's got the best place.'

'No, thank you, Harry; I'm hot enough. Well—but about your affairs—about this debt to Arnold?'

'Oh, he's a dreadful man; yes, he is! I thought you was going to make matters worse, sir, by telling me the Colonel couldn't wait for the rent.'

'Clear off Mr. Arnold first, Harry.'

'Ah, Master Edwin, that's easy to say. But when a man's got a lot of strings in his hand like that man has, it ain't so easy done. It's not only flour and corn and cake and some hay I had off him in the last three or four years. He's bought up Jackson, you know, waggons and carts, and I owe him a lot for drawing. Then, four years ago, when I was in a tight place with the bad seasons, I borrowed of him at heavy interest, Master Edwin. Ay, often I've repented it. But if I can pay anything, it's that there interest I must pay, and he's been talking lately about wanting the principal.'

'I'm sorry to hear all that. I knew something of it before, of course,' said the young squire. 'Well, Harry, I wish we could help you.'

'It would be a queer thing, a man going for help to some of his biggest creditors,' said the old farmer, with his queer smile, half merry, half sad.

'Oh, well, my grandfather or his agent may have been rather rough on his tenants, but I believe he used to say we were all one family at Stepford.'

'He was a Dampier—it's a fine race, if I be a Radical. Listen to me a bit, sir; I'll tell you more particulars of this here Arnold business.'

The old man stood up and said grace, then moved away from the table, lit his pipe, and sat down near the door. Miss Maria began to carry the things into the back kitchen. As she clattered the plates she said—

'Jessie Downes will have a bad bargain with that Joseph Arnold. Mrs. Downes should ha' thought of the deceitfulness of riches afore she gave her consent to that. But there's folks as worship money.'

'Very few of us think it a fictitious business, like you, Miss Maria,' said Edwin.

'Very few; but I doubt you're one,' the old woman retorted.

She had hardly spoken, when a shadow fell across the flagged path at the door, and a voice addressed old Harry Holt, who was sitting in full view of it.

'Good morning. Will you be so very kind as to tell me what o'clock it is?'

Harry laid down his pipe—it nearly fell on the floor—scrambled to his feet, made a bow, and shuffled across the kitchen to look at the tall old clock in the opposite corner.

'We find it answer to keep our clock three-quarters of an hour fast, ma'am,' he said. 'As far as I can calculate, it's now close on the quarter after twelve. By Tarringford time, that is.'

'Thank you so much. Does that pretty hilly field belong to you, and may I go up to the top of it without trespassing?'

Harry was all one smile as he hobbled back towards the door.

'We don't call it trespassing when folks like you walks over our fields,' he said—nobody could talk more nicely than Harry when he chose. 'Please to walk wherever you choose, ma'am. There's an awkward gate, to be sure; but here's young Mr. Dampier 'll undo that for you, and feel himself honoured. Besides, all Stepford's free to the landlord, though all tenants mayn't be as friendly as me.'

'Indeed, I can't complain,' the young voice at the door began, but there was a falter in it now, and a slightly preoccupied tone.

The girl made a step forward, so that she could see a little into the dim interior of the room. Edwin, who was sitting rather behind the door, got up at the same moment, half angry with old Harry for his forwardness, half sure that he had no time to waste in unfastening gates. Why couldn't the old rascal unfasten his own gate, lazy beggar? How did he know——'

Then, the girl standing in the doorway, their eyes met, and he forgot the rest of the universe.

All her life—which now, unfortunately, cannot last many years longer—Mrs. Downes will grudge old Harry Holt that moment.

Both Edwin and the stranger were seized with shyness; perhaps each had thought a good deal of the other through those vacant days since she came to the farm—it was not unnatural. But her first glance spoke of something more than shyness; it was the look of a hunted and hiding creature on whom the hunter has chanced suddenly. With a second glance, however, she smiled, quick intuition driving away fear. Nothing was to be apprehended from the frank gentleness and good breeding in the young man's face. As for him, all his teasing fancies about an adventuress vanished away as if they had never been.

He snatched up his hat, and was ready to follow the girl wherever she chose to lead; but old Harry, who watched the scene with twinkling eyes full of mischief, was not quite satisfied with such informal proceedings.

'Yes, ma'am, this is Mr. Edwin Dampier, of Stepford Hall, the Colonel's only son and heir. From not knowing you myself, ma'am, nor your residence, I can't equally make you known to him; but, for all that, I ain't mistaken in a lady when I see one.'

'Thank you,' said the stranger. She bent her head towards Edwin, smiling. 'I am called Miss Field, and I am staying with Mrs. Downes at the Old Slang Farm.'

As her eyes met his again, now full of something like amusement, she blushed suddenly and vividly. The colour seemed to be catching, for Edwin also became crimson.

'Ah, to be sure,' cried the old man. ''Taint often I get so far as the Slang, but I met Hezekiah one day, and he says to me—he's a queer fish, Hezekiah, with that beard of his a-blowing to all the winds of heaven—he says, "Mr. Holt," says he, "we've got ever such a pretty young lass stopping with us for the summer." Excuse me, ma'am, we're ignorant old fellows,

Hezekiah and me; but that's how we talk in the country, and we don't mean no harm, as Master Edwin here can testify.'

'I think you are very kind people in the country,' said Miss Field. 'Good-bye; I will come and see you again some day.'

She shook hands with the old man, and then Edwin, in a state of dream-like astonishment, found himself walking away with her up the garden and out into the fields.

'Well, you are an unmannerly chap, not to have asked her to sit down,' said Miss Maria, coming forward from the back kitchen. She had seen and heard comfortably through a chink.

'No more I did! Never mind, she's coming again. I warrant you Master Edwin 'll come again too, and in his Sunday coat,' chuckled Harry. 'Look at 'em, Maria. Don't they make a beautiful couple?'

'I never knew such a silly and vulgar old creature as you, with your frivolling ideas. And what's the poor young man to marry on, if you don't pay your rent? I declare, sometimes, I do feel shocking bad ashamed of you; and turning it all off with jokes, like a baby, white hairs and all!'

'Ah, you're always right, Maria. It's beyond a joke, so it is; and I never got through telling Mr. Edwin about that Arnold business. Oh, he is a dreadful man. He'll ruin me yet, Maria. Now I'll finish my pipe, if you please.'

'What a dear funny old man!' said Miss Field, when they were out of hearing. Her companion had not spoken, except to his dog, who jumped upon her with unusual friendliness, since they left the house door.

'Yes, he is a nice old man,' said Edwin; 'one of the best among the farmers here. But I'm sorry to say he is like the rest of us—he can't make both ends meet.'

'Can't he? He bears his troubles very cheerfully, then.'

'Yes; Harry has always a light heart. There ought to be something Irish in his composition, but I don't know where it comes in.'

'Harry, you call him. What is his surname?'

'Holt—a regular old Midland name. His forefathers have lived here as long—as long as mine. This *is* a scandalous gate of his. I jumped over it just now; but you must not attempt that. You would tear your dress.'

—'Dark blue dress and hat, fair complexion, brown hair, and hazel eyes.'—

But the *Times* had not attempted—luckily it was beyond its province—to describe that beauty which, as the French say, *s'impose et ne se prouve pas.*

Miss Field's quick senses were quite aware of a look of puzzled, questioning criticism, which waged an unequal struggle in young Dampier's eyes with dazzled admiration. She flushed a little again, but she said quickly—

'It certainly is more like a hedge than a gate. And Mr. Holt is not contented with brambles and briars; he has chained it up like the gate of a besieged city. It will take half an hour to unfasten, and you will hurt your hands too. Look, here by the latch it is not so thorny. I'll get over, if you will give me a hand on the other side.'

Under these circumstances, having jumped the gate in her service, it was hardly to be expected of Edwin Dampier that he should make her a bow, jump back again, and leave her to climb the long green slope alone. It seemed more natural to both of them that they should walk on together. She talked, asking a good many questions about the country, the farms, the poor people, which he answered rather barely and generally, his brain being occupied with the one question—herself; a question which he dared not touch upon in words, but which became every moment more absorbing.

Stepford Hill rose so gently from the general flatness of the country that the view from its top was startling to a stranger. Far below the river wound among the deep meadows; the distant woods, the scattered oaks, were rushing from red and yellow into green. Several miles away to the north, the tower of Tarringford could be seen; nearer, a white thread of high road crossed the landscape; nearer again, the thick trees clustered about the Slang, and the broad white front of Stepford Hall shone in the sun, its own oaks and firs not intercepting the view from the hill. Sheep were nibbling the short grass, and lambs racing on the slopes; high in the bright May air a lark was singing. Edwin, in his old and muddy clothes, stood silent beside the stranger.

'Poor fellow!' the girl thought. 'What depresses him? Or is it that he disapproves too much of me?'

'And this is all yours, Mr. Dampier?' she said aloud.

'On that side, my father's land runs nearly as far as the high road,' he answered. 'A good way across the river, and in that direction too.'

'All agricultural?'

'For our sins, yes.'

'I think I rather like it. You seem to have such nice tenants. Your Mr. Harry Holt is charming, and who could be nearer perfection than Mrs. Downes?' Her eyes laughed as she looked at him, but he was staring at the horizon.

'I was thinking of agricultural rents,' he said. 'And all this morning I've been hedging and ditching—figuratively—finding out how much must be spent in fences. Oh yes, Mrs. Downes is different. She's quite ideal.'

'Even when she is foolish enough to answer a very queer advertisement. You were angry with her for that, were you not?'

'Did she tell you—how could I possibly know?' said Edwin, in some confusion. But then her laugh was so delightful that he could not help laughing too.

It was most refreshing, it was like the removal of a great weight, to feel that he might look her in the face without any cloud of mystery between them—at least, so far as the advertisement itself was concerned.

'Mrs. Downes and Jessie are both too loyal to repeat anything,' said the girl. 'But I heard you through the window, the morning after I came, scolding poor Jessie very severely for bringing me home. I admired Jessie; she stood up for me so bravely, though she must have known in her heart that you were right, and that I *might* be some sort of dangerous adventurer.'

'Jessie had seen you—I had not—please remember that,' said the young man. 'And your advertisement was—puzzling.'

'Was it?—yes—but see how successful!' she said, with an odd uncertainty in her voice. 'I could not have hoped to find a quieter place, or kinder people. It is just what I dreamed of—a farm-house in the depths of the country.'

'Oh yes; you are all right with Mrs. Downes,' said Edwin. 'And certainly we are remote enough—though not so very far from the high road, after all.' He smiled and glanced at her.

'Far enough for me to have good walks without finding myself on it, and being afraid of meeting anybody.'

There was a little silence; then Edwin said gently, 'Do you know, you are very mysterious.'

'You think so still?' cried the girl, with a laugh. 'You are not satisfied with Jessie's explanation—"a lady who particularly wishes to be private"? You can't take her word for its being "all right"?'

'Yes, I can; and I do. Besides, it is no business of mine. It was Mrs. Downes I was anxious about. Now that I know she has made no mistake, you can mystify me as much as you please. I will do my best to keep the country quiet for you, without asking any questions.'

'Thank you, Mr. Dampier,' said the girl, much more gravely. 'But I won't accept your friendliness on any false pretences. I should like to tell you something—not much—about myself. For I don't wish to be a tiresome mystery to people who—people that I can trust.'

Edwin lifted his hat and smiled.

'I have run away from my guardians,' Miss Field went on, rather hurriedly. 'They have behaved very badly to me, very tyrannically, and it seemed the only way to escape from something perfectly odious. Well, I will tell you the truth,'—the girl flushed and bit her lips, looking away to the distant hills. 'They had planned for years that I should marry a certain person, whom I hate. They really behaved like barons in the Middle Ages to an unfortunate ward. They tried both persuasion and threats. At last I ran away—it seemed the only thing to do. I found a little lodging at Manningham, and sent that advertisement to the local paper. Then dear Jessie Downes came to me, and you know the rest.'

'Forgive me,' said Edwin, hardly able to put his interest and sympathy into words, 'but I don't think you should have run away. I think perhaps you should have appealed to the Lord Chancellor.'

'I really did not know what to do. I had no one to advise me. And it was only a question of hiding myself for a few months. I shall be of age at the end of the summer, and then they can do no more. Besides, I did not want to make a great disturbance. Though they have behaved so badly, one of them is an old friend of my father's. But it seems that nobody is to be trusted when——' She stopped short, and her eyes became anxious as she looked at Edwin, who had taken out his pocket-book.

He held out a slip cut from a newspaper. 'This must be you, I think,' he said.

The next moment he was sorry. The angry terror and excitement in the girl's face startled him.

'Mr. Dampier! What do you mean? How did you get this? When—when did this appear?'

Edwin told her the date. 'It was the morning after you came,' he said. 'I went back from the farm rather mystified, as you know, and my eye fell on this in the first sheet of the *Times*. It has been repeated three times since, and each time I have quietly annexed the sheet and destroyed it. I had a sort of notion that it had to do with you.'

'I could not expect they would not do something,' she murmured. 'Sharpe and Keane—those are his horrid old lawyers. He, poor man, was the least bad of all. It was his son—and the other. This description is too exact. I must get Jessie to buy me a gown—red or pink or something—and a straw hat; and do you think I had better dye my hair black and stain my face with walnut-juice, as they do in story books?'

'No, I don't think I would do that,' said Edwin.

'Are you quite sure? But now, is there any one else about here who reads the *Times*? Oh, do you think that man reads it—you know who I mean? He always looks at me rather queerly, though he never saw the advertisement, and they told him I was come to lodge for the summer. It is heavy on Jessie's conscience, I'm afraid; but I could not let her tell him. I don't quite like him enough.'

'Arnold, you mean? No, I don't think so. Men like him are more interested in the local papers, and luckily, it seems, they only read the business advertisements.'

'How clever of you to cut this out! Put it back in your pocket-book, and burn it when you get home. But isn't it very late? I shall be late for dinner, and Mrs. Downes will look reproachful. Besides, they will be frightened. They did not quite like my going off for a walk alone, but I felt as if I must, and the lonely field paths always seem so safe.'

'May I walk back with you?' said Edwin, shyly.

'Please do. You are going home too, are you not?'

That was a strangely happy walk to one at least of the two; one who felt, though he dared not say so even to himself, that the other was the companion he would choose out of all the world for all his life long. They talked till they reached the foot of Mrs. Downes's orchard, where the apple blossom was fading. He told her about his father and his home life, the *History of Battles*, and his own poor occupations. She listened and asked questions with a charming interest. She spoke of herself with more reserve, and seemed indeed, once having given him her confidence, to shrink a little from the

subject. But as they lingered a moment at the orchard gate, for she would not let him go any further something in his good grey eyes seemed to reproach her.

'One thing—' she said; 'you may still call me Miss Field to other people, even to Mrs. Downes, for only Jessie knows what I am going to tell you—my name is Viola Fairfax.'

'Thank you for telling me,' he said, and he held her hand for a moment, looking at her.

Both faces were pink as they hurried their several ways; the fugitive under the orchard trees, her new friend and champion along the hollow lane that led back to his home and his father.

As he went, foolish young man, he took that slip of paper once more out of his pocket-book and kissed it. He was four and twenty, and had never yet been in love.

(*To be continued.*)

A HAPPY MARRIAGE IN TROUBLED TIMES.

BY ANNIE ARMITT, AUTHOR OF 'THE MARTYRDOM OF FAUSTINA,' 'THE VIKING'S JEWEL,' ETC.

THE year after the poet Milton married his first wife another union was celebrated near Oxford, that was to have a very different ending. It is natural to think of the two together; the times and places were not far apart; both the brides were very young, and both the bridegrooms approached middle age. But the poet's marriage is remembered by us for its disappointments and misfortunes. Richard Fanshawe's was so triumphantly successful that the memory of his virtues is preserved to us chiefly by the talent and devotion of his wife.

It was in Wolvercot Church, in the year 1644, that Richard Fanshawe, being then thirty-five years old, took to wife Ann Harrison, aged nineteen, the fortunes of both bride and bridegroom being 'in expectation.'

Ann Harrison had not, however, been used to poverty. Her father's wealth had been so large that, only three years before her marriage, her brother William (sitting as a burgess in Parliament) had undertaken that his father, Sir John Harrison, should provide 150,000 pounds—so Ann relates—'to pay the Scots who had then entered England.'

Ann was the eldest daughter; she had been born in London, in a house where the family spent the winter months; and she had been carefully educated. She had been taught French, singing, the lute, the virginals, and dancing, besides all sorts of fine work with her needle. She was not naturally of a studious turn; she loved riding and running, and describes herself as a 'hoyting girl.' Her childish hours of recreation, spent in skipping and active pastimes, were very different from those of little Lucy Apsley, the daughter of the lieutenant of the Tower, who was afterwards to become Mrs. Hutchinson, and, like Lady Fanshawe, to write memories which would bring down her husband's virtues to posterity when the merits of so many

contemporaries were forgotten. Colonel Hutchinson's place in the recorded history of the time is small indeed; and the references to Sir Richard Fanshawe, even in the diary of his cousin John Evelyn, few and far between. It is to the devotion of their wives that these two men owe nearly all the fame that remains to them to-day.

When Ann Harrison was fifteen years old her mother died, in accordance, as all her family believed, with a prophetic vision that she had received fifteen years before. Ann was a baby, only three months old, when her mother was seized with a grievous illness which ended in apparent death. The whole household was mourning her loss when there came to it, to console the husband, a certain Dr. Winston. He went into the room where the wife lay, and, 'looking earnestly on her face, said she was so handsome, and now looks so lovely, I cannot think she is dead.'

He took means to discover whether she was actually alive, and then, being assured of the fact, to restore her to consciousness. When she came back to herself, and spoke once more to the friends who believed they had heard her voice for the last time, she told them of the vision revealed to her as she lay in a trance; and how, on the verge of another world—if she had not already entered it—she held converse with two beings in long white garments, who marvelled to see her troubled in her new and happy estate; how she had begged for the grant that had been made to Hezekiah, fifteen years more of life, that she might see her daughter a woman; and how a voice had answered her, 'It is done.'

Fifteen years afterwards, Ann having grown to womanhood, as womanhood was understood in those days, the mother died in deed and in truth. Then Ann, finding herself the head of the household, 'flung away' the little childnesses that had possessed her. She was able, though so young, to order the home and the family so as to give her father satisfaction; she says that she was always anxious to keep the 'best company,' by which she does not mean the company of those who were titled and wealthy, but those whose character, culture, and conversation made intercourse profitable; and her father lived in affluence and prosperity.

Then came the political troubles which plunged a great part of the country into ruin and desolation; the time when families were divided, and members of the same households fought in

opposite ranks; when country houses were turned into castles and subjected to the horrors of siege and incendiarism; when homes were violated by the presence of rude soldiers billeted therein by one party or the other; when companies scoured the fields and lands, driving in the cattle and plundering the houses as they went. In those days many had to fly from their estates, and return, after years of absence, to find their comfortable homesteads in ruins; others lingered at home in danger and poverty, troubled by demands, legal and illegal, and by the impecuniosity of tenants, who, in some parts of the country, refused to stock the land unless the landlords would undertake to compensate them for all cattle that might be driven away by marauders of either political party. In Mrs. Hutchinson's life of her husband we read of the ruin of their home; in the recently published memoirs of the Verney family there are vivid pictures of the desolation suddenly brought on happy and prosperous families. England had long been unused to trouble of this sort, when it fell now, it fell with crushing severity.

There was an end of 'great plenty and hospitality.' In 1642 Ann's father was taken prisoner in his house in Bishopgate Street. He would have been 'sent on board a ship'—mysterious and dreaded fate of the time—'with many more of his quality,' if he had not got away by a pretence and joined the King at Oxford.

There was in those days a terror of ships and the sea that can little be understood now. The very presence of water, whether in the great Thames highway, or in the open channel, was enough to inspire a prisoner with dread. Both sides felt alike on the matter. Colonel Hutchinson, from the windows of his prison in the tower, had watched his friends being 'shipped away,' and had prepared for the same fate himself; his wife had trembled at the nearness of the sea at Sandown, which suggested easy transportation to Tangier; and Sir John Harrison believed that he narrowly escaped such a fate. This fear is not to be wondered at when we read the letters and chronicles of the period. Sir Edmund Verney writes, after the capture of Colchester by Fairfax, 'The Parliament are selling the Scotts common prisoners to the Barbadoes and other plantations, which I conceive to be about 12,000 or 14,000 men, and artickle the merchants for theire not returning.' And Dr. Kirton wrote from Paris, 'The Scotts are sold at London to those who have plantations abroad for £5 the score.'

A little later poor valiant Sir Edmund himself only escaped the like fate by being treacherously slain. Cromwell relates among the details of the surrender at Drogheda, where Sir Edmund met his fate: 'When they submitted, their officers were knocked on the head, and every tenth man of the soldiers killed; and the rest shipped for Barbadoes.'

However, Sir John Harrison was able to escape to Oxford, and to call his daughters to him there. His son William had already joined the king. Sir John's resources were, of course, crippled by the enormous loan he had made; he had now been compelled to abandon his home, so that he was plundered of what remained to him, and his whole estate was sequestered by the Parliament. He had sacrificed his fortune for the king, and the king had nothing with which to repay him—except, indeed, an empty title. He offered to make him a baronet—a baronet's patent being procurable without capital, and a baronet's title very light baggage to carry about with him in his wanderings! However, Sir John declined the proffered honour, being content with the knighthood that he had.

The court was now at Oxford, and the beautiful mediæval city might be supposed to be a place of gaiety and enjoyment. It *was* supposed to be such a place by members of the opposite party. Lady Sussex wrote in July, 1643:—

'They are very merry at Oxford, I hear, and think to overcome all suddenly.'*

Lady Fanshawe, however, describes something very different. She and all her family were in poverty. Oxford was crowded with refugees as impecunious as themselves, cut off from their ordinary resources, so that they had no means of helping one another.

Sir John had to establish himself in a 'baker's house in an obscure street.' His daughters lay in a very bad bed in a garret. They had only one dish of meat per day, badly cooked and served, as it was likely to be in such quarters. They suffered from the want of money, and a great scarcity of clothes. They had travelled in a hurry, and had only brought away what a man or two could carry in their cloak-bags. Round them they heard discourses and rumours of war and trouble. Their brother William was soon killed in a skirmish in which he took part on the king's side. From their windows they saw no cheerful sights; they looked instead upon fighting and plague-stricken

* The lady's spelling is not precisely so, but those are her words.

people. The overcrowding of the place, and the insufficiency of food, brought visitations of sickness and disease on the town.

But youth and hope can prosper under the most untoward circumstances. There must have been at this time in Oxford a kinsman of the family, not quite a young man, but young enough for all purposes of love and romance, especially if, as we may conclude from what we read of him, his manners were courteous, his appearance interesting. He had a ready tongue, and a true, kind heart, as well as a high and cheerful spirit. Here were merits enough to atone for the poverty of his circumstances as the youngest son of a house which, like so many others, plunged itself into difficulties in the king's cause. The kinship between the houses of Fanshawe and Harrison gave a sufficient reason for the visits of Mr. Fanshawe to the obscure lodging in the baker's street. We are not told how the marriage was brought about, whether by the father's arrangement or the young people's own inclination to one another. We can imagine that Sir John's two daughters, torn from their virginals and embroidery frames, with no space in their narrow rooms to practise any dancing steps, or otherwise divert themselves, would gladly receive so pleasant a visitor as Mr. Fanshawe; and that he, on his side, might find them charming even in the absence of their best clothes. The romance that began in the baker's house was to end only, as such romances should, with the lives of the actors in it.

The wedding, then, took place in Wolvercot Church, and Ann Harrison, the bride, was married with her mother's wedding ring, bequeathed to her for the purpose. The month was May —a season superstitiously supposed unfavourable to matrimonial happiness; but this marriage proved all that it should be when time had tried it to the uttermost. The wedding party was small, but the members of it not without distinction. Their fates were various. The bridegroom's brother-in-law was soon to be slain in the king's service, as the bride's brother had already been. The bridegroom was to become an ambassador to a great court; and Sir Edward Hyde, one of the two guests who were not near relations on one side or the other, was to be known to us to-day as the grandfather of two queens of England.

The couple married with a small outfit in hand; it did not amount to twenty pounds betwixt them. There was, indeed,

an abundance put down on paper, for, besides the fortune that the bridegroom should have, there was the bride's portion of £10,000; but both these were 'in expectation.' The bridegroom had been appointed secretary to the Prince's Council of War, and he laid out his small capital in pens, ink, and paper. His wife declares that on that provision they lived 'better than those that were born to £2000 a year, as long as he had his liberty.'

That was what she ever most desired—his personal safety and welfare; and, after that, the pleasure of his society. She was not always able to enjoy it; when she had it she was compensated for all privation and discomfort. His duties called him from her when they had not been a year married, and she was lying ill with a weakly baby in her arms. The child died two days after, and she herself, suffering more from her husband's absence than even this loss—or suffering from it the more *because* of the loss she had to bear without his comfort—did not recover her strength for many weeks.

In May, the month of her marriage, she sallied out of her chamber for the first time to go to church. Her husband sent letters to her 'by all opportunities,' but those were not the days of regular postal service, and she did not know when to expect news. On this day, after service, she was accosted by a gentleman who told her he was the bearer of a letter from her husband, and also of fifty pieces of gold. The letter was full of 'inexpressible joys' to her, and the gold also; the one summoned her to join her husband, the other would serve to pay her expenses by the way. The baker's house—if it was still the baker's—could no longer contain this happy person. Though very weak, she 'went immediately to walk, or at least to sit in the air,' in the garden of St. John's College. Delightful Oxford! that has such retreats even in the time of war and overcrowding. There she communicated her joy to her father, who, with her sister, was to accompany her.

The next day they were all on their journey to Bristol, 'very merry,' sickness forgotten, poverty forgotten, even the little grave over which she had had to weep alone at Oxford. There were dangers by the way, but these were safely passed. She reached good lodgings at Bristol, and was received into the arms of her husband, who gave her a hundred pieces of gold, saying, 'I know thou that keeps my heart so well, will keep my fortune, which from this time I will ever put into thy hands, as God shall bless me with increase.'

So, for a time, her troubles were over; and it was in this period of rest and prosperity that she was instigated to make an experiment on her husband's fondness for her, which she prettily records.

A meddling kinswoman advised her to seek her husband's confidence in state affairs. The young wife, spoilt by happiness and her husband's indulgent love, feeling also, perhaps, her pride concerned in this matter of his reticence, made an effort to change his habit in this respect. She did not yet realise that his high character, which so satisfied her own ideal in private life, must make him unyielding to even *her* importunities on public affairs.

Mrs. Fanshawe knew that her husband had just received a packet from Queen Henrietta Maria, then in Paris. She wished to know what the packet contained; so she followed him into his study, whither he had gone with his handful of papers.

With a certain proud humility she relates the result, glad indeed that she, as an 'unlessoned girl,' had found such a noble teacher in her husband.

He turned hastily, and said, 'What wouldst thou have, my life?' I told him I heard the Prince had received a packet from the Queen, and I guessed it was that in his hand, and I desired to know what was in it.

He smilingly replied, 'My love, I will immediately come to thee, pray thee go, for I am very busy.' When he came out of his closet I revived my suit; he kissed me, and talked of other things. At supper I would eat nothing; he, as usual, sat by me, and drank often to me, which was his custom.

She relates further importunities, to all of which he answered nothing, but stopped her mouth with kisses. The next day, when he came home to dinner and went to her as usual, she, holding him by the hand, asked if he cared to see her troubled.

"To which he, taking me in his arms, answered, 'My dearest soul, nothing upon earth can afflict me like that, and when you asked me of my business, it was wholly out of my power to satisfy thee, for my life and fortune shall be thine, and every thought of my heart in which the trust I am in may not be revealed; but my honour is my own, which I cannot preserve if I communicate the Prince's affairs; and pray thee with this answer rest satisfied.' So great was his reason and goodness, that upon consideration it made my folly appear to me so vile, that from that day until the day of his death I never thought fit

to ask him any business, but what he communicated to me freely in order to his estate or family."

So her girlish error was corrected, and she proved herself worthy to be his trusted as well as his dearly-loved wife. She remained always his confidant in private affairs, the companion of his many wanderings, the sharer of his troubles, his comforter and practical helper in difficult times. She was more than content to accept the answer he had given her.

> 'I could not love thee, dear, so much,
> Loved I not honour more.'

THE ENCHANTED FOREST OF WITCH ELMS.

BY HON. MRS. W. F. MAITLAND.

CHAPTER I.

THE moon shone very brightly down on the lake that lay in the very heart of the forest, though her light could not pierce the gloom anywhere else. The elms were gnarled and bent into indescribably queer shapes, and they had interlaced their branches till they had grown into an impenetrable mass. Just round the border of the lake, however, the trees seemed to have drawn back and left a margin of soft grass and reeds to edge it, and on its surface there rocked water-lilies, and they gleamed in the moonlight like carved ivory caskets holding jewels.

A little breeze was stirring the water, for the Fairy Ripple had kept this one spot fair and fresh from the enchantment that had been cast over the whole of the rest of the forest. At the foot of one very gnarled old tree lay a stone half hidden in tangled grass, and on it was graven in ancient characters—

'The spell shall hold well,
And naught shall it shake,
Till brave, pure, and true,
Shall the heart be to rue,
And that shall it break.'

For ages no one in this land of Rubiania had tried to make a way through the trees. For whoever had attempted it, was never the same again. It altered, it was said, not only his health, but his character and appearance, so that his nearest and dearest failed to recognise him again. So gradually the good people in the neighbourhood had given up trying, and had taught their children to avoid it also, and one age had succeeded the other, leaving the forest to itself, except when some unwary traveller, a stranger to these parts, had fallen a victim. But for a very long time no one, at any rate belonging to the country, seemed to notice it or indeed speak of it.

But there came a day when the king's little son, a chubby boy, pointed his fat finger at it in one of his walks, and wanted to know first what it was, and then why he never had been taken there to gather wild flowers, as he had been in other woods around the castle, for the forest lay a black mass in sight of the windows though it was a good way off. Oddly enough, the boy did not appear alarmed at what he heard about it, and the answer he received did little else but stimulate his curiosity. And once he had been found straying by himself towards the forest, and by the time his attendants reached him, he was preparing to force his way under the branches. It was difficult for them to persuade him to return. 'Why don't you cut it down if you are afraid?' he had said, struggling to free himself from their hold. The king having been informed of his son's danger on their return to the castle, he sternly forbade the prince to go near the forest again. Of course he had to obey, but a vehement resolve formed itself in the boy's mind that when he was a man the forest should be done away with. He little dreamt how this desire of his would be fulfilled.

But soon other things filled the prince's thoughts and occupied him, for he grew up strong and well, and had never an ache or pain to make the king or queen anxious about him.

And better, far better, than only strength or health, he grew in kindness of heart and unselfish thought for others; and so it was that although he was foremost in all manly sports and exercises, his strength was always used to protect the weak, and it had grown to be quite a saying with the people, 'The prince will right it,' and their grievances were laid before him continually, for they knew well how his wish was a law with the king, who loved and admired his son above everything; and sometimes the prince was sorely puzzled how to act, between his desire to right anything at once and his knowledge that this was not always the wisest plan, although to his warm heart it seemed so.

Nothing hitherto has been said of the prince's appearance, and though kind thoughts give a charming expression to the countenance, so that he could not have been exactly plain, he had besides been endowed with more than ordinary good looks. The strange thing was that with these gifts of mind and person, Prince Ulric, as he was named, remained thoroughly heart-whole. So that his fair curling hair, worn long in the

fashion of that day, bore no lady's colour on the love-lock that fell over his heart. Indeed, the prince's power of conversing with the ladies of the court seemed very small, though they attributed this, rightly or wrongly, to his habitual shyness. The historian of the time thought that his heart was already given away, and had been from his earliest years, in that he adored his mother, and he had often declared in those early years that when he grew up he would marry her and no one else.

As he grew older, his allegiance to her rather increased than otherwise, and her lightest word weighed with him. Fortunately the queen was a very wise lady, and she tried to use this power of hers for his and the country's good. Prince Ulric's ready sympathy had ever been a consolation to her, for she needed in troubles to be consoled although she was a queen, and especially had she felt this on the occasion of a great sorrow which had befallen her years before, when her greatest friend, the grand duchess of a neighbouring province, had died. She had died suddenly, when her first baby, a darling little girl, was but a few months old. The christening festivities had not long been over when the young duchess became ill, and passed away in a few, a very few, days.

Not so very long after this sad event, a further calamity befel the grand duke. The little baby princess had, in the good old-fashioned way, a fairy godmother, who had, however, presented her with no visible gift. She had desired that among the many names bestowed on the baby the first and paramount one should be Sunshine, and this having been done, she had only laid her hand for an instant on the infant princess's forehead, and had then gone away in the usual fairy chariot, merely remarking, as she stepped into it, that wherever the baby was, with whomsover she was, would be sunshine, and it would be their own fault if the sunshine disappeared. And for a time, her words seemed literally verified, for there always was about the baby a power to cheer those with whom she happened to be. From the first she was such a merry laughing creature, and the sunshine seemed in reality to come from her bright eyes, and she drew smiles from the gravest people, from the Lord Chamberlain, who was of a very melancholy temperament, to the poor duke, who mourned sadly for his young wife's death, but who yet could not resist smiling at his baby daughter's ways.

And so things went on for rather more than a couple of years, and then—then a terrible thing happened. It was the most dreadful blow, for the little princess had grown to be simply worshipped by the whole of her father's court. And, alas! so much adoration had not been good for her. The continual injudicious petting and giving way to her every whim could, unfortunately, have but a very sad effect, for, after all, she was only mortal. And so, though it is sad to relate it, the little thing had learnt she had only to stamp her foot, if anything was denied her, and immediately she got her own way. In particular she ruled her most constant attendant, the Countess Dusseldorf, who though, as her governess, she attempted to remonstrate with her, in reality spoilt her more than any one. This in itself was a catastrophe that the beautiful, bright nature should be overclouded and ruined by such a bringing up; but this was not the blow, the one that every one felt, that occurred in the following manner.

One morning the little princess and the Countess Dusseldorf were together in the palace garden. As usual the baby, who could now toddle about everywhere, and run too, wanted something impossible to be given her. She had asked for the big gilt ball that was fixed as an ornament over the top of the large, handsomely wrought iron gates of the garden. At first she made her request with a most enchanting smile spreading all over her little face, for she quite thought that the poor lady beside her would gratify her wish, and she wanted, with all her baby heart, to make the great golden glittering ball roll along the flat gravel walk before her. But as the Countess Dusseldorf ventured to explain that it was impossible for her to have it, the sunshiny smile vanished, and in place of it (it is very sad to have to record it), frowns of the crossest and ugliest description gathered, and puckered up the little forehead, the baby fists were clenched, and the tiny feet stamped with impatience and rage, and 'Me want it—me want it!' the last *me* a most imperious one, was drawn out into quite a scream. In vain did the poor lady endeavour to remonstrate and explain, the princess would not be pacified, and her governess was just at her wits' end what to do, when she suddenly felt quite a sharp rap on her shoulder, and a voice said, 'You old idiot!' yes—actually she heard herself spoken to thus. She turned hastily, naturally feeling indignant, when her *name* was called loudly, this time from behind a yew tree, which was clipped into the shape of a large bird and was

one of a row of such trees, all cut into different forms, that bordered the broad walk that they were on. The countess looked behind the tree, but seeing no one, she turned again to her charge, when, to her utter astonishment, she had disappeared. Yes, the little princess was nowhere to be seen. Her poor frightened lady-in-waiting at first rubbed her eyes thinking she must be blind, so suddenly had the little toddling being vanished, and then her alarm increasing, she ran up and down the walk calling the princess by every endearing name—entreating her to show herself, promising, as her fear grew, that the golden ball should be hers, and even the one on the topmost cupola of the palace if she wished for it. But still no little toddling figure was to be seen. Again the countess stopped and rubbed her eyes, but no, there was only the long line of fantastically clipped yews, and in front of them the rose-coloured, white, and yellow hollyhocks, varied with blue larkspurs. But no little princess anywhere. Then the poor lady fell to shrieking violently. On hearing the noise that she made, which, to say the least, was terrifying, shoals of attendants rushed into the garden, all of them wishing to know what could be the matter.

The Countess Dusseldorf managed to gasp out, 'The princess is gone—is lost!' and then she fainted away. Upon this the greatest commotion began. All the ladies, who did not immediately faint too, sobbed and shrieked, and the gentlemen and pages flew everywhere, shouting that the princess was lost.

A detachment of the grand duke's own guards turned out to help in the search. The grand duke himself, who was awakened by the deafening noise, for it was still quite early in the morning, and before his usual time for rising, thrust his head out of the window to know what was the matter, in his hurry forgetting his curled wig, and appearing with his night-cap very much on one side. It *was* terrible—it *was* exceedingly sad, but it remained a fact, and not at all 'the duke's horses, nor all the duke's men, could bring the little princess back again,' search as they would throughout the country wide. Despatches were sent everywhere, and immense fortunes were offered as rewards to the finder of the lost little darling.

Of course the fairy godmother had been applied to in the first instance, though how this was managed has not transpired, but as they knew how to invite her to the christening, it may be

safely supposed she was now informed in the same manner. But summon or inform as they would, the fairy did not vouchsafe a reply, but preserved the most obstinate silence towards the grand duke and his whole court. He, poor man, could do no more; indeed, there seemed no more to be done in the matter.

Among the despatches and notices sent off of his loss, it was natural that one of the first should be sent to the King and Queen of Rubiania, for, as has already been recounted, the queen was one of the late grand duchess's greatest friends; and Prince Ulric, who was then about ten years old, learnt about it from his mother's lips, his blue eyes filling with tears at her recital, but not for the baby princess's loss, for he had never seen her even, but in sympathy with his mother's tears, for the good queen was dreadfully shocked and grieved.

CHAPTER II.

BUT sad as the event related in the last chapter is, it had happened so many years before that people had begun to forget it, and though the poor grand duke mourned for a long time, and even for years hoped against hope for news of the baby, *he* even had at last felt he must rouse himself from his grief and disappointment, and try and take an interest in the next heir, who, by the law of the land, would become the grand duke after him, but only in the event of his having no children to succeed him, for the little princess would have reigned as grand duchess after her father's death, according to the law.

Unfortunately, the next heir, who was a distant relation, was most uninteresting, both in character and appearance. *He* regretted more than any one the princess's disappearance, for he was a shy, retiring man, who shunned display, and hated a public life, and desired only to be left in peace to his own devices, instead of being obliged, as was now the case, to appear on public occasions with the poor grand duke.

All through these years Prince Ulric had not only grown up, but had distinguished himself as a brave soldier, leading his father's army successfully against the enemies of his country, and returning covered with glory, his daring acts and deeds

recorded in song and story, and more than ever popular. It was still a saying that he would right all grievances. But with all this increasing popularity, in one respect, and that an important one, he did not please his country at all. For several years past, rich and poor had alike wished that he should marry. But the prince had refused to take any notice of these wishes, and had parried in one way or another any reference to the subject. No one had been more vexed about this than the king, though he persevered in hoping that his son would change his mind.

He was therefore the more astonished when one day, having called Prince Ulric into his private apartments, and having put it to him, for the hundredth time, that it was his duty to marry, he noticed that the prince flushed a most becoming colour, looked very desperate, and then blurted out, 'Had his father any particular lady in view?' The king was delighted; he jumped up, and, unlocking a cabinet, drew forth quite a long list of suitable ladies, all of course of royal blood, and desirable in every way.

Prince Ulric glanced but hastily at the list, and then suddenly clenching his hands, exclaimed—

'It is hard to be a prince!'

'Not at all, my dear son,' replied the king, who was agreeably surprised that the prince would even allow the thought of his marriage—'not at all; these things are so easily arranged for princes.'

'And if I do not wish them easily arranged?' retorted Prince Ulric, his eyes flashing.

'Oh, well, I must say, as perhaps you know, that I fell head over ears in love with your mother—that to be sure is quite true—but then, but then——' The king racked his brains for a reason, and then finished lamely, 'Princes cannot in the usual way expect this.'

'And *I* not only expect it,' burst out the prince, 'but——' He was gone without any further explanation of his meaning.

His hasty manner was so unlike his usual filial behaviour to his father, that the king hurriedly repaired to the queen, to communicate to her the way their son had this time received his suggestion.

'Cannot you use your influence on him, my dear?' he said. 'It is great' as all know, with our beloved son, and the country requires it.'

'I know,' answered the queen; 'but then I have never tried to influence him against his conscience, and I sadly fear in this instance nothing I can do or say will be any good. I fear, I fear——' And she folded her hands, and looked mournfully out of the window to where her son was galloping far away on his favourite black charger.

Presently she told the king that for a long while past Prince Ulric had appeared unlike himself to her; many times he had seemed on the point of telling her something, and then had suddenly checked himself. He had taken to long solitary rides, forbidding his attendants to accompany him; he had seemed lost in thought when in her society, instead of delighting her, as formerly, with his conversation on the subjects that had always interested them both.

'Indeed,' she added, as she finished, 'till quite a short while ago, I have been unable to make him out at all, but lately have you not noticed that at times he wears a rose-coloured ribbon on the curl that falls on his left shoulder?'

The king became very grave on hearing this, and his hopes of his son uniting himself to one of the royal ladies on his list disappeared. For both he and the queen, with all their love and admiration for their son, knew well that he was of a most determined disposition.

In the mean time the prince having ridden fiercely many miles, at length drew rein, and turned in a direction that had long become familiar to both his horse and to himself.

In order to understand, we must go back a little, to a day, a few months before, when the prince had been returning from the chase. The sport that day had been very good, and the horse he bestrode was the third that he had tired out in the pursuit. For this reason he rode slowly, his reins hanging loosely on its neck; his thoughts were just then of the enchanted forest, which, for a little time, had been looming in view. 'It is a disgrace such a horror should exist,' he murmured. 'Shame on me that I do not find the means to sweep it away!' And he began to weave plans for its extermination, for the disenchantment of the forest had ever continued his heartfelt wish. His active brain was thus busily employed when he came in sight of a little cottage that was not very far from the edge of the detested forest. His thoughts were suddenly put to flight, and he checked his horse, for the most delightfully sweet voice was singing the following little song:—

'Spin, little wheel,
Steady as steel,
Round and round in the sun;
You must make no sound
As you spin round and round—
Round and round till my flax is spun.

'Fly, little wheel;
Cannot you feel
When my foot treads fast or slow?
Fast, I said, fast,
Fast, and at last
We shall finish and rest, you know.

'Turn, little wheel;
You are not deal,
But plum-tree wood so fair,
So turn. Do you hear
What I say, my dear
Little wheel that art light as air?

'Roll, little wheel,
Little wheel that art leal,
Leal and true as my heart—
Roll away, pray;
Roll, and to-day
You may hope to finish your part.

'Work, little wheel;
Work is the seal
That is set on a life that is true.
Work, and forget,
Till the sun set,
How very much work you do.'

The singer appeared, from the way she sang, to be making up the words as she went on, and they seemed to come from the exuberance of a happy heart.

The prince listened for a short time, whilst the gloom, which ever seemed to gather on him at the thought or sight of the forest, was entirely dispelled, and in its place a feeling of exquisite happiness stole over him, which he could not understand. Then he slipped quietly from his horse, and, leaving it to its own devices, crept round to where the voice came from, hoping to have a view of the singer without interrupting the song or being seen. His astonishment was great when he obtained a glimpse from behind a tree, for he discovered that the voice was no lovelier than the singer herself.

She appeared to be about seventeen or eighteen years of age, and she wore a chintz gown, with bunches of ribbon of the colour of a moss rosebud at her neck and sleeves. Her figure was faultless, and a charming little foot peeped from beneath her dress, and rested on the treadle of the spinning-wheel at which she was seated, and which had been placed in the small garden that surrounded the cottage, and not very far from its door.

Her face, from which the prince could not take his eyes, was beautiful, her features were exquisite, and the rippling hair, which was turned back from it, was bronzed gold. Her complexion was slightly sunburnt, but an entrancing colour, the herald of perfect health, peeped through her cheeks, whilst the softest, most velvety of brown eyes, with pencilled brows above them, looked up from time to time from her work.

The prince stood transfixed till her song was ended, and then he stepped from his hiding-place, and, approaching her, he bowed low, till his plumed hat swept the ground.

'Fair maiden,' he said, 'have pity on a tired huntsman, and let him have a drink of fresh water.'

The girl started violently, for she had not noticed his approach; but, recovering herself almost immediately, although her cheeks vied with her ribbons in colour, she made a low curtsey, which matched the prince's bow for grace, and said—

'Pray, sir, will you enter our little cottage; my grandmother will be delighted, and I will bring you some new milk to drink from our cow, for it is time to milk her.'

She turned and called, 'Grandmother, grandmother.' An old woman appeared in the doorway of the cottage. She was very crabbed and wrinkly looking, and very bent, and she leant on a stick, but her face had a kind expression, and she begged the prince to enter and rest awhile in her house, whilst a smile of welcome lit up her homely countenance.

As he did so, he was greatly surprised to find that the interior was not like an ordinary cottage. There were many shelves on the walls, filled with well-bound books, works by authors that the prince was well acquainted with, and which bore witness to culture and refinement of understanding. A lute, tied with a rose-coloured ribbon, hung over a chair, as if not long laid down, whilst a writing-table, with every requisite for writing, stood at one window, and on an easel at the other was a charming water-colour sketch that was but half finished; the paints and brushes were still scattered on a small table near it.

Of course he did not notice these things all at once, but gradually, as seated on an oaken settle, he talked to the old woman. Indeed, he had plenty of leisure for observing everything, for the maiden did not return till a long time had elapsed, and not till the prince had glanced at the door impatiently more than once. This was not unperceived by his hostess.

'Your royal highness must excuse my granddaughter's slowness,' she began.

'You know me, then?' interrupted the prince, who had hoped that he was unrecognised.

'Every one should know the hero of a hundred battles,' replied the old woman, in a most courtly tone; and then continuing, she explained that she had recognised him at once, but that her granddaughter could not have done so, for she had been always brought up in seclusion and away from news of any kind. 'I am a very old woman,' she went on, 'and it is different for me; besides, I go marketing, but I have never allowed Pearl to do things of that kind.'

The prince was more and more surprised; indeed, he grew very curious. He was enchanted with the name of the maiden, and had begun to compose a poem to her in his mind, when she returned with the milk.

She was full of regret at his having to wait so long, but related in a charming manner how Snowdrop, their cow, had strayed some distance, and she had first to find and then to catch her, and all this had taken such a time.

'You should have called me to help you,' exclaimed the prince, full of concern for the trouble she had been put to for him.

'And you so weary, and our Snowdrop so fleet of foot,' returned the girl, her brown eyes full of innocent surprise, for the prince's weariness appeared to have vanished unaccountably.

Prince Ulric made no answer to this remark, for the expression of those eyes thrilled him through and through, and he felt in this damsel's presence no longer a great prince, for alas! a most unfortunate thing had happened—he had fallen hopelessly and entirely in love with this poor little peasant maiden. Alas again for the country's expectations, and for the poor king and queen!

The prince's power of conversing now utterly failed him, and he racked his brain to find some topic—some excuse, in fact—for lingering, when he knew in his heart he ought to mount his

horse and gallop as hard as he could from so dangerous a spot.

Suddenly he remembered the enchanted forest, and the thoughts that had occupied his mind till they had fled on hearing Pearl's song. When he spoke of the forest she seemed greatly interested, and *her* bright face saddened, as she said—

'Ah, sir, it is an evil! How our good king must grieve at such a misfortune in our beautiful land; it is like a plague spot. Even the little birds are slain by its wicked power, if by chance they alight on a branch of one of those terrible trees; though, indeed,' she added, in a delightfully simple way, 'most of the dear birds and animals have learnt to avoid it; but then there are travellers who have unwittingly attempted to enter it, and worse things than death have happened to them. Oh, it is an evil! I would I had a magic sword, then would I hack the branches right and left, and make a passage for an army of wood-cutters to fell those dreadful, dreadful trees!'

'You—you wish this, too, and would do such a deed?' exclaimed the prince, glancing with admiration at the tiny hands that were clasped together with enthusiasm as she spoke, and wondering to himself at the courage that could beam from those soft eyes.

''Twere no good,' interrupted the old woman. 'The forest will never be conquered by force of that kind; 'tis only to be done in one way.'

'In one way! What way?' exclaimed the prince, turning to her full of animation.

''Tis not to be learnt in a moment,' said the old woman, shaking her head; and she refused to explain what she meant, though the prince plied her with eager questions.

She reminded him of the lateness of the hour, and said some other time perhaps she might divulge more; 'or,' she added provokingly, 'he would most likely learn for himself.'

And the prince, seeing she was utterly determined he should know no more then, made up his mind to take his departure, for he suddenly remembered that his attendants might be searching for him, and his horse would betray where he was, and this somehow he did not wish.

But he then and there determined to return before long to the cottage. 'It is only right I should do so,' he said to himself as he rode homewards. 'If that old woman, who looks any age, can give me the clue that might lead to the disenchantment of

the forest, it shall be done, for it *is* a plague spot on the land.'

And so, as this is a true record of Prince Ulric's doings, it must be supposed that the frequent visits he paid from henceforth to the cottage were entirely for the good of the country and the destruction of the Witch Forest.

(*To be continued.*)

THE ELDER TREE.

BY REV. H. MILNES.

'Lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over and gone;
The flowers appear on the earth,
The time of the singing of birds is come.'

YES, it is the early spring-time. The nights are still chilly, and in the early morning the lawn is powdered with hoar-frost. In the daytime there is bright sunshine.

The snowdrops have donned their pure white mantles, and the crocus is spreading his cloth of gold. Only a few trees and shrubs, such as the lilacs in the corner of the shrubbery, and the gooseberry bushes in the kitchen garden, have ventured to make a faint show of budding green; but here is my brave, hard, much-enduring friend, the elder, actually beginning to uncurl its leaves. I have known and watched this tree for a long, long time—ever since, as a boy, I played under its shadow, and made whistles out of its pithy stems, and year after year I have seen its trunk growing more and more rugged and gnarled.

Now and then—

'When stormy March hath come at last,
With winds and clouds and changing skies,'—

it has lost some of its branches; still, sheltered as it is from the north and east, it is always among the first to make a show of—

'Softly green, as emerald seen.'

My old factotum, Robert, has long looked upon this tree with an 'evil eye,' and has often suggested to me how much better it would be to cut it down. He says 'It pizens all the ground as it stands on, and nothin' will never grow anywhere's nigh it.'

Hitherto I have resisted his appeals, but I fully expect that

some day or other I shall be obliged to give way to his prejudices.

The country-folk seem to look upon the elder tree in quite a superstitious way. Many of them will not allow it to be burnt on any account, and the reason they give is, that they suppose it to be one of the trees from which the cross was formed. For the same reason it is said that, even during the most severe thunder-storm, the lightning will never strike it.

In Scotland, where the elder tree goes by the name of 'bour tree,' the same idea is also common, and is expressed in rhyme.

> 'Bour tree, bour tree, crooked rung,
> Never straight, and never strong,
> Ever bush but never tree,
> Since our Lord was nailed on thee.'

No household furniture ought to be made of it, and to make a cradle of this wood was a sure way of bringing evil on the child that slept in it.

It is looked upon, however, by some as a charm against evil, and so they nail a cross made of it to the door of their cow-houses and stables to protect their cattle from harm. It is very often found near to cottages, country houses, and barn-yards, it having been purposely planted there as a protection against wizards and witches.

The inner bark of the elder affords a green-coloured juice, and any one whose eyes are anointed with it is thought to be able to see what mischief the witches are working in any part of the world.

The elder is remarkable for its vitality, and this has given rise to the idea that if it is planted in the form of a cross upon a newly made grave and blossoms, it is a sure sign that the soul of the dead one is happy.

On the top of one of the hills in the Peak of Derbyshire grew an elder tree. For some reason it was cut down, and, at the following hay-harvest, a portion of the trunk was placed under a haystack. At the expiration of more than a year, the stack of hay being consumed, the piece of wood was used as a post in a temporary shed for cattle. In the following spring it began to sprout. For some reason or other, the shed was soon removed, but the corner post remained and became a healthy flourishing tree.

I have heard a folk-lore rhyme, quoted by an old labourer, which hints at this wondrous vitality—

'An elder stake and hazel heather,
Will make a hedge to last for ever.'

Spring has now yielded to summer, and my old friend, the elder tree, is covered with bunches of cream-coloured flowers. Do you not catch the scent of them as you pass? You do not like it? Sickly, do you call it? I do not know any perfume exactly like it. The nearest approach to it is the white Frontignac grape.

Just gather one or two bunches of the flowers and examine them carefully with your pocket lens. Now count the number of flowers on each corymb, and you will find that they amount, on an average, to about four hundred, so that, if there are one hundred and fifty bunches on the tree, you have no less than sixty thousand flowers.

Oh what wonderful, lavish profusion from the great Creator's hand!

And what variety there is! The usual structure of the flower is sepals five, petals five, stamens five; but as you examine them you will find sepals four to eight, petals four to eight, stamens four to nine. While you are looking do not the words of Holy Writ come with additional force into your mind, 'consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is and to-morrow is cast into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, oh ye of little faith.'

While you then gaze, and admire, and wonder, learn also a lesson of simple trust.

Just let me advise you to take your two bunches of flowers and put them into the water-jug in your dressing-room. You will find the water so much more refreshing, and will probably lose all those freckles from your face, that now cause you so much annoyance.

The bright summer is gone, and mellow autumn steps into its place. Now my old friend has lost all its creamy flowers, and, instead, it is showing bunches of rich ripe fruit, hanging in thick, purple clusters on its branches.

This is the time when the wise farmer will sow his wheat, according to the old saying—

'With purple fruit, when elder branches bend,
And when high hues the hips and cornels lend;
E'er yet chill hoar-frost comes, or sleeting rain,
Sow with choice wheat the neatly furrowed plain.'

In John Clare's 'Shepherds' Calendar,' for October, occur the following lines—

'Wild shines each hedge in autumn's gay parade,
And when the eldern trees to autumn fade,
The glossy berry picturesquely cleaves
Its swarthy bunches 'mid the yellow leaves.
On which the tootling robin feeds at will,
And coy hedge-sparrow stains its little bill;
The village dames, as they get ripe and fine,
Gather the bunches for their eldern wine,
Which, bottled up, becomes a rousing charm
To kindle winter's icy bosom warm;
And with its merry partner, nut-brown beer,
Make up the peasants' Christmas-keeping cheer.'

Ah! that 'eldern wine!' How well I remember it! Hot, spiced, pungent, aromatic! How acceptable it was on our return home from church in the depth of winter! I am afraid that some time before the good old rector reached the third head of his sermon my thoughts ran on in happy anticipation of the luscious draught. And then, it was so hot, which was so tantalizing, and it had to be taken by sips, or with dry toast dipped into it. Our housekeeper used to say it 'warmed the cockles of her 'eart,' but what particular part of the heart she meant, I certainly never understood then, nor do I understand now. She made the same quantity every year, and, though she knew perfectly well how to make it, yet she always had her recipe book by her side, and invariably consulted it. I will give you a copy of her recipe; I know, from experience, that it is an exceptionally good one—

'Boil equal quantities of water and elderberries, picked from their stalks, till the berries dimple or burst; strain them through a brewing sieve; and to every gallon of the strained liquor put two and a half pounds of sweet Lisbon sugar. Boil for about twenty minutes. Then pour it into a cooler. When quite cold, put into it a piece of hot toasted bread, covered with a large spoonful of yeast; let it work for twenty-four hours. Skim off the yeast, and tun the wine. If it works more than three days, put two wine glasses of brandy to ten gallons.'

The elder has a near relative, but it is seldom seen. Its name is *Sambucus ebulus—alias* water elder, *alias* 'Danewort.' Why 'Danewort,' I wonder? There is an old legend that this plant only grows where Danish blood has been spilt. Superstition goes even farther than this, and holds that wherever the Danes

fought and bled, there the 'Danewort,' which has a very fetid and noxious odour, springs up and flourishes. The idea that it springs from blood gains some slight corroboration from the fact that it is found growing abundantly in Worcestershire, in the very spot where the first blood was spilt in the Civil War between the Royalists and the Parliament.

I have just been into the village to call upon Martha Barker, and to inquire after her daughter. I found the poor woman in great trouble; for, though her daughter was decidedly better, yet she was quite sure that she would never recover. And, when I asked her why she thought so, she took me into the little croft at the back of her cottage and showed me an elder tree which was flourishing there, and was loaded with its clusters of rich purple fruit; but, alas! on one of the inner branches I spied a bunch of cream-coloured flowers. Flowers and fruit at the same time on the same tree! Oh! horrors! This was too much for old Martha, who saw in it a sure sign of her daughter's death. She declared to me that the same thing had happened just before her husband's death some years before.

Now stern winter has come. The cold north wind steals rapidly across the lawn.

'The garden boasts no beauty now,
The summer graces all are fled,
Frost glitters on the leafless bough,
And branch and spray alike are dead.

Still the old elder is decorated with a few yellow-green leaves.

As it is the first to show its buds in the early spring, so it is the last to shed its leaves in the winter's cold. It is an emblem of a staunch friend, who sticks by you in your times of hearty joy and in your times of bitter sorrow.

THE MAIN CHANCE.

BY CHRISTABEL R. COLERIDGE, AUTHOR OF 'WAYNFLETE,' 'THE TENDER MERCIES OF THE GOOD,' 'THE PROPHET'S MANTLE,' ETC.

CHAPTER XIX.

ALL FOR HIM.

GUY and Florella drove along over the hilly road to Kirkton, with Rawdie tucked comfortably in between them under the fur rug. They left the worst of the smoke behind them, and the dim glories of the winter sunset reached them through a thin veil of moorland mist. Above their heads the sky was clear and blue. They were quite silent for a long time, then Guy said, as if continuing the former talk—

'If I did not discount my thoughts on this subject as much as I formerly did my visions, the thing would be easier to bear.'

'Tell me what your thoughts are,' said Florella softly. 'How does the thing seem to you?'

'Well,' he said, 'it seems to me, remember I only say *seems*, that *that* which has all my life pursued me dwells within me, as it may still dwell in those others. It is part of me and of them, and yet I am not it. That which I suppose is an impulse to others is a personality to me. As I once saw the form, I feel the spirit that has been our bane, and as it took the outward shape, so it seems to take the inward self of those who yield to it, who grow into its likeness, as I too may, so that I feel that they draw me down after them. I can only hold myself apart by the strongest effort. It would swallow all the rest of me. But it is different from what it was when I was a boy. Then I felt abject fear of the thing itself—blind terror.'

'And that you conquered,' she said.

'Yes,' he continued; 'that I conquered, as God helped me. Now the presence symbolises, suggests, make inevitable, other fears. It cramps my will, saps my courage. I say *It*, it is

better to keep words within the mark; but I could put the sense of personality much more strongly.'

'But how do you "discount" these feelings?' said Florella.

'Why,' he answered, 'I was never sure how far the physical manifestations that used to trouble me were part of my own physical nature. These conceptions may be part of my mental nature—just as well. Then all is driven back to a sphere behind thought, beyond conception. If there is nothing there, Florella, no cause for all this, then are we nothing ourselves but the shadow of a dream. That blank is more awful than the fiend's presence. And yet it is there—*there*, in utter formlessness—that the battle must be fought. And there—*there*, if I exist—*this* exists that is not me.'

'But there,' whispered Florella, 'there is God.'

'Yes,' said Guy; 'but for me there *only*. The other manifests itself.'

Florella was silent. He saw her fair pale face upturned to the sky, thoughtful and undismayed; he felt her warm firm hand pressing his arm. At last she said—

'I don't think God means you to go *there*. You must think the thoughts, as you see the sights, that He sends you, and eschew evil and do good under the forms that come to your soul. That is why He sent us Christ. You "cannot wind yourself too high for sinful man beneath the sky." Deal with what comes.'

'But then, Florella,' said Guy, and under the clear sky and in her fair presence, his tone was gentle and patient, however sad, 'I have had no Beatific Vision, there is no Holy Presence in my soul.'

'Has there never been?'

'Now and then I have thought so. But, if I am so made that I feel the evil, how is it that the good if it exists is not here?'

He turned his eyes towards her, and she saw their lonely look.

'I am here,' she said, with a great courage, and pressing her hand in his. 'We will be alone together if we must, but you know it is not *new*. That is what Jesus felt, "forsaken," too.'

'I have remembered that,' said Guy, quietly, 'but He knew there was One to forsake Him. I have to struggle with what I scarcely believe. No one can be more incredulous of my experiences than I often am myself, and of course I fear to infect you.'

'If I were to forsake you, with my soul,' said Florella, 'what would be left in me? We are one through and through.'

There was a little silence as they climbed slowly up the moorland hill, and he held her hand tight, and let his eyes rest on her while she looked away from him at the sky.

'Guy,' she said, suddenly, 'what is the wrong thing that this evil one wants you to do?'

Guy started.

'It is very difficult for me not to do many wrong things,' he said.

'Definite wrong things?'

'Yes; at least things less than right. There is one thing, but I am not sure yet whether it is wrong or no. I don't think that just now I can tell you what it is.'

'But outward things depend upon it?

'Yes.'

'Well, then,' she said, 'it may be hard to resist the bad one within you; but it is quite simple. You must do exactly right, and whatever comes we must put up with it.'

'Oh,' said Guy, sadly and humbly, 'the world *is* dearer than one's own soul.'

And then, after another pause, he said solemnly, 'Kiss me.'

They kissed each other on the lips, and so he took her into her share in the battle, and silently pledged himself to the noblest part.

They were coming near their destination, and she changed her tone, and questioned him as to his health and his doings, and planned how they would meet, and how, for a few days, she would come to Ingleby Vicarage as she had been asked to do. Did he always come in at one o'clock, and get luncheon? And did he go out riding, and take Rawdie to walk? Did he sleep very badly?

'You came to me in sleep,' he said; 'and I was afraid to sleep for fear I should come to you.'

'So you did,' she said, smiling. 'That should have taught you better than to try to keep me away.'

It was rather like a dream to Guy to find himself in the big hall at Kirkton, with a gay party clustered round the hearth, and tea and hot cakes and many greetings all pressed upon him at once. He felt almost dizzy with the change as he sat down and talked about the Kirkton pheasants, and watched Rawdie doing tricks, and being rewarded with cake and cream.

'You should leave him here, Mr. Waynflete,' said Miss Raby. 'Leave him with Florella. Won't he stop with her? It is a shame to take him home on a cold night.'

'Guy had much better stop and have some dinner himself. Never mind your coat, Guy. They will give you a part in the play.'

'Yes, we are going to rehearse some scenes,' said one of the young men; 'if you will stop, Waynflete, we will cast you for the Boots, Miss Vyner's the bullying landlady.'

Guy, however, declined all these temptations. He was too busy to stay, and said he would rather see Miss Vyner bully some other Boots. As for Rawdie, he could do as he liked.

But Rawdie was ready at his first movement, and Florella refused to coax him to stay with her. Guy accepted a future invitation for himself and Staunton, and set off in clear, shining moonlight for his long drive home.

The lights of Kirkton streamed out from the doors and windows, speeding him on his way.

It was not till the evening was over, that Florella found herself alone, and able to think out what had passed; and then, as she sat by the fire, and recalled the words she had said, the arguments she had used, a great awe came over her.

She had spoken words that came partly from the sweet instinct of habitual faith, partly from intuitions that were in themselves an experience; but as they echoed back upon her in the fulness of their meaning she trembled. Spiritual Force, Divine Help, the Presence of Christ in the soul, these were comfortable words; but, oh, how tremendous, how all but incredible to flesh and blood, was the reality behind them! There came upon her for a moment a blinding, overwhelming flood of realisation, and she hid her face—she knew what it was to be 'afraid to look upon God.'

She knew what Guy meant by the place 'behind his thoughts,' where his warfare lay, and there for him—were *those others.*

But she cried out of the awful blankness to the face she knew, and the heart she loved, and her soul came back to its balance again—to the needful conditions of flesh and blood, and to thoughts, hard, but within her ken.

She must back Guy up, heart and soul, in doing the right thing, regardless of worldly consequences, and she faced the possible alternatives before him, and knew that none of them could break her heart, or make her life wretched. While, as

for the problems behind, awful they indeed were; but their conditions were to her far simpler and more credible than they could be to Cuthbert Staunton, or even to Guy himself.

The appeal of a wandering soul for help seemed to her natural; and, as for 'that bad one,' as in childish phrase she put it, she set to work and prayed that he might become better. She comprehended Guy's perplexities; but it seemed to her that there was only one way to face any abysmal deep of personality, or of non-personality. Guy had

> 'to fight
> With the bad within him,
> And to do the right.'

The words which he had lisped in childhood contained all the truth for him still.

CHAPTER XX.

MISSING THE TRAIN.

GUY drove home over the moonlit moor. A vast flood of silver light spread itself over the long sloping hill and revealed its space and stillness. Below him, Flete Dale and Ouseley were in black shadow. Some way ahead, lower than the road, a glimmering star of light showed Kirk Hinton Station.

The light on the moor was so clear that Guy could have seen a grouse rise, or a sheep stir, as far as his eye reached.

His soul within him also was clear and still, full of the ineffable light of Florella's faith and love. 'It may be hard to do right, but it is quite simple.' So had Florella said, and he felt, as he well might feel, new will and power. For the moment the alien presence seemed to have been driven out of him. Did it lie in the depths of the dark vale below, ready to take visible shape beside him as of old?

'It cannot,' said Guy to himself; 'for I do not choose that it shall. And if it did——' He half smiled to himself as he felt how little difference it would make to him if it did.

Why then should he suffer from its impalpable, invisible presence? He felt his own soul alive and strong. What mattered the spiritual shadow that lurked for him among the shadows of the haunted valley, among the deeper shadows of his own thoughts?

'It may be hard to do right, but it is quite simple.' Simple?

It was hard. He pulled up his horse for a moment, and looked down into Flete Dale. Was he to give that up, to leave it to its dark inhabitant? Let it go, as the resolute woman who had bought it back had always believed that he would? No! Guy encountered the thought of this giving up with such a passion of resistance that he spoke aloud in the moonlight the very thought of his heart. 'No! I'd give my life for it—my very soul!'

'Yes; that was just what "he" did.'

This answering suggestion shot into him like a dart of fire. Yes, after all, it was to keep the lands of Waynflete that that old haunting ghost had sold his soul.

'I'd rather sell the mills than give it up!' If he did, it would surprise no one. He was an interloper, an outsider. Not one of all the Palmer kin had expected him to be able to carry on the Palmer business. Life wouldn't be much worth living if he had given people a right to say that he was, after all, a failure. Besides, there was no need to say it. This matter of the shares had come up just at the right time. The discovery of the coal was a godsend. What a fool he would be if he gave up such a chance for a mere intuition which might be a matter of nerves and brain, or for old prejudices which were worthy of no one but Uncle Mat or Cousin Susan. How grossly unfair to Wickham such weakness would be!

No; Godfrey had thrown up the sponge! He must try another round. Long ago he had known that giving up was fatal. These doubts about the coal shares were a delusion, another ghost which he must pass, as he had passed the figure on the bridge, before all the old mischief was undone, and prosperity could really come back to Waynflete.

The sense of courage and of capacity returned to him. He drove quickly on, and when he came in and met Cuthbert he looked at him and smiled.

'I should think so,' said Staunton, answering his look. 'I'd face all the fiends in hell after to-day. And as for filthy lucre and success in business, and all that—good Lord!—what is it, with *her?*'

Guy looked at him with his serious, searching eyes. 'You don't know much about fiends or business either,' he said; 'but with her I'm not going to be beaten.'

Guy carried that conviction into the work of the next day. He held on to it when he heard that certain old customers had

gone to Greenaway's 'with a large order.' He held on tighter still when he decided to offer terms to others, and to give pledges which made his old managers stare and hold their breath. He kept the reins in his own hands, and, perhaps, no one but himself knew exactly how things were. He was not the only one with whom times were bad. There was a failure of a great firm which usually bought their goods, and which owed them money for goods manufactured expressly to meet a special demand. Still, Guy looked ahead. He was young, he was clever, he was very daring; and, if the next few months could be pulled through, he thought that he saw daylight. There was a meeting that afternoon, at the George, at Rilston, of the executive committee appointed to carry on the business of the coal company, and to make further arrangements. Afterwards, Guy, Wickham, and Maxwell Mervyn meant to adjourn to the office of Palmer Brothers, and discuss in private the matter of the Fleet Dale Shares.

It is a commonplace that the same event bears for different people an altogether different aspect; just as the events of one life are inextricably entangled with those of another.

This meeting of shareholders meant much for Katie Fielding. There was so daring an idea in her mind that she could not even think of it without heart-beats and thrills. There had long been an arrangement that she should go by train to Rilston, to get some Christmas presents for Mrs. Lennox. The expedition was quite simple, and could be easily performed in broad daylight. It had cost only the least little bit of management to fix it for the day of the colliery committee. 'He' would be in Rilston, and she wouldn't even tell him that he might see her there too. She could keep out of the way of the meeting; but he should just have a glimpse of her, and then, coming home—if she *did* miss the the 3.50 and have to take the 5.10—when he saw her, he would make some plan—some plan that would be quite right, because he made it, and which would be filled with delight.

Katie started in her prettiest hat and coat, with a list of every one's commissions in her pocket, and all sorts of daring possibilities in her heart.

She took, as is the habit of young ladies of small means, her third-class return ticket at the station, catching a glimpse of 'him' getting into a first-class smoking compartment with Mr. Waynflete.

Never mind. It would be all the more delightful when he saw her at Rilston. She took her way towards the pastry-cook's, recommended by Mrs. Lennox, where she proposed to refresh herself with a sausage-roll and a glass of milk. There were two ways, and she chose the one that passed the George Hotel, where the meeting was to be held. Yes; he was there, standing on the steps, and, so far as her dazzled gaze could see, he was alone. Blushes, smiles, and half-veiled eager glances were met by a blank stare and a momentary lifting of the hat as he turned into the hotel. He had not given her the most secret of smiles.

Poor Katie went on to the pastry-cook's because she trembled and needed to sit down; but she never thought of the sausage-roll, and had to be asked twice what she wanted before she even remembered the glass of milk. She dawdled over her small repast, and then over her purchases; she guiltily refused to look at her watch till a clock struck and she knew it was too late for the earlier train. Then she came again up the High Street, and gazed into the saddler's window, as if straps and horse whips were of essential interest to her. Was the meeting over? She *felt* him coming out of the hotel; springing down the steps and hurrying along the street. She turned round suddenly and lifted her face—again all smiles, blushes, doubts, and fears.

If they could run away down the side street, and he could take her to the station! She saw no one else, surely he would not snub her now.

'What are you doing?' he said sharply, and almost without a pause. 'How can I possibly speak to you here, and now? Don't be so frightfully imprudent; you risk all. Another time."

She put up her little hand, and, in desperation, almost caught his sleeve; but he went on inexorably, leaving her white and trembling, as Max Mervyn dashed across the street and came up to her.

'Katie,' he said, with frowning severity, 'what are you doing here by yourself? It's much too dark for you to be out. It's not the proper thing.'

'I—I missed the train back,' said Katie; 'Mrs. Lennox sent me to do some shopping.'

'I'll walk to the station with you,' said Max. 'You know, Katie, I'm an old friend, and you're very young and inexperienced; and if Mrs. Lennox doesn't look after you better

than to let you stroll about in front of this hotel in the dusk, it's my place to tell you that it's not the proper thing. Some one might *see* you, some one may have seen you before, if you've been so thoughtless. I only wish to throw out a hint, just a hint; but Mrs. Lennox ought not to allow it.'

'Thank you,' said Katie; 'I shouldn't have known you were giving me a hint if you hadn't told me.'

'Well, if you want me to put it more plainly——'

'Not at all. What you call "a hint" I call an insult; you needn't repeat it, Mr. Mervyn.'

Max felt suddenly abjectly miserable; but he stuck to his point.

'You may be as angry with me as you choose,' he said; 'but it's not right, and you wouldn't have done it at Baywood, and I'll knock any one into the middle of next week that I see anywhere near you.'

Poor Katie's courage was at the lowest ebb. The day had been one long disappointment. She was hungry, she was cold, she was utterly wretched, but the retort was too obvious.

'You'd better knock yourself into the middle of next week then, I'm sure Mrs. Lennox would not approve of my walking with you.'

'I shall take you to the station,' said Max.

'Don't be ridiculous,' said Katie, 'some one will see you.'

'That's exactly what I wish to happen.'

'I don't.'

'I can't help that.'

They marched on side by side, much as if they had quarrelled over their toys in a Baywood lane. Max escorted her, grimly and silently, to the door of the ladies' waiting-room, where he handed her over to the woman in attendance, to whom he gave half a crown, desiring her to look after the young lady and get her some tea.

'There's more than an hour before the train goes,' he said severely, 'and I have business to attend to.'

'I'm very glad of it,' said Katie, spitefully; 'and I don't want any tea.'

Max hurried back to the warehouse, where he found Guy and Wickham wondering what had become of him. He glanced at the latter, who looked quite cool and imperturbable, and who began to talk to him with the kind of deference and assumption of his importance to their scheme which was most agreeable to his vanity.

Guy sat watching them. He was extremely pale, and though Max did not notice him particularly, Wickham was fully aware of his intent and critical gaze.

Max responded to skilful treatment. He patronised the other two in so open a way that Guy could only smile at it, and revealed unconsciously both his hopes and how much his fortune favoured him. For 'Uncle Bob's' investments had indeed been lucky ones, and Max was quite rich enough to be really a person of importance to the company, to take his place on more than equal terms among the capitalists and land-owners.

'And that's what I want,' he had often said to himself and to any one who cared to listen. 'I don't want to fool it all away, and go on the turf, or swagger about in town, or go globe-trotting, and fooling round. I want to settle down and found a family. If I'd had the chance of the old attorney, I'd not have lost the Waynflete property again when I'd once got a grip on it. I'll pick up land bit by bit, you see if I don't.'

'You should marry money,' Wickham had once before said, after an utterance of this kind; 'there are those Greenway girls, made of money, and a good-looking chap like you, old name and all, wouldn't have a bad chance.'

Max had smiled and sniggered when this flattering remark had been made to him; he remembered it now as he listened, while Wickham explained that the transfer of the shares was to be for the present a 'confidential transaction,' as Mr. Waynflete's name and support were important to the affair, he reckoned the advantages and probabilities over again, and said that he wished he could have held on to his own shares, as they would become more and more valuable. Max listened, and as the skilful talk went on, the thought drifted slowly into his mind that this was only a beginning, that old Attorney Maxwell had begun in a small way, and had ended—where? Guy Waynflete wanted to sell his shares, Max knew that he had not much ready money at hand, indeed, Wickham had given him to know it, was it possible that by-and-by——?

Max slapped his hand down on the table, though he did not speak.

'That's what I want, that's what I'll have one day, Waynflete Hall, next door to Ouseley! That's the thing for me!'

He looked up, and he met Guy Waynflete's great eyes, which, he said to himself afterwards, 'seemed to see my bones.'

'I—I beg your pardon, did you speak?' he said involuntarily.

'No,' said Guy, with a queer little smile; 'I don't see that there's much more to say—at present. It's the coal shares we're concerned with—now.'

'Well,' said Max, 'I'm willing to take those, if you're willing to sell them on the terms which we've been discussing, and to conclude the transaction before—let me see, what was the date we fixed?—January 15th.'

'After which date,' said Wickham, 'the whole matter will be before the public, and the transfer need no longer be a secret.'

'Do you agree, Mr. Waynflete?' said Max.

'Yes,' said Guy; 'I agree.'

He looked full at Wickham as he spoke, and past him, right into the dark of the room behind.

'Come along then,' said Wickham, moving, 'we have only just time to get to the train.'

'Ah, yes, the train,' said Max, starting up, 'to be sure, there's the train.'

They all walked quickly up to the station together. Katie was walking up and down the platform, casting anxious glances round. She stopped at the bookstall and gazed at the second-hand novels.

'Evening papers?' said Wickham, stopping also, and quick as Max was, he was certain that a word passed.

Guy stared a little, and lifted his hat; but Katie fled as the train came roaring up, and was lost in the crowd of passengers. Wickham looked unconscious of her, and Max angry with her. The train was full, and they had to separate, but on the Ingleby platform Max had the satisfaction of seeing Mr. Lennox's black coat, and to hear him, when he found Katie, scold her pretty smartly for missing the train. He carried her off at once, and Max, after a moment of indecision, posted after Guy, and overtook him as he went up towards the Mill House.

'I say,' he said abruptly, 'I want to know in confidence what you think of that fellow Wickham, after all.'

(*To be continued.*)

FROM MY ATTIC WINDOW

Spring Fever. Was there ever a miracle like the spring? Each year it seems more miraculous than in any previous year. Each year the gold of the gorse seems more golden against the blue of the clear sky, swept clean by winter rain and wind. The first daffodils I found down in the orchard, which the old monks planted on the sunny slopes looking down on the river, were surely lovelier than ever, the faint scent of the early primroses more delicious than before. Even that whiff of burning wood which comes from the swaling fires creeping over the hills is a delight. But that very thrill of hot life which comes with the spring brings its thrill of pain. Poets have sang, some quite unintelligibly and some with quite a considerable amount of meaning, from time immemorial about the charms and joys of spring. But only just one here and there has discovered its pain. And yet spring by reason of its very loveliness brings a keen sense of trouble, a longing which is so subtle that it is not possible to discover its reason. Of course I write for those who see and feel and understand. Is it perhaps that we mortals face to face with the perfection of beauty feel all too keenly that we are imperfect and jar the harmony of the worlds? Is it not, as Plato said, that the angel of beauty frees our earth-fetters, and we long to fly upwards to the Source of all beauty? Who knows? The microbe of this spring fever has never been discovered.

Of course there are a certain class of minds (dear useful souls) to whom spring suggests visions—visions of beaten carpets, washed curtains, dusted book-cases, and swept and garnished fireplaces. Oh you excellent and good folk, you will have your reward!

* * * * * *

A valuable Experiment. The experiment which has been in progress for the cure of inebriate women at Duhurst near Reigate in Surrey has now been tried long enough to discover some of

the results. And those results prove it to be more than a qualified success. The methods employed prove that the highest form of common sense combined with a shrewd insight into human nature have been brought to bear. The essential point is that the industrial farm, as it is euphoniously and yet truly called, is in the sweet air of the country with no temptation to drink within a radius of three miles. Then instead of a ponderous and ugly barrack, there are charming thatched cottages, each with its own garden and individuality. This system means to the inhabitants absence of friction, and real sense of home. The cottages are furnished with the appliances of good ordinary artisans' dwellings, and are clean, dainty, and attractive; so that women who have perhaps wrecked their households and lived in dirt and neglect begin to realise, with returning sanity, what a home might be. Then the outdoor life with its varied occupations, gardening, fruit growing, and dairy work, is so sane, so wholesome, and so restful, that weary women worn with their own dissolute life, drink in health and peace and fresh interests with their daily work. No wonder the applications for admission have exceeded in the past three years those who could be received by three thousand!

Lady Henry Somerset herself writes the report for 1897, and from it I learn that last year sixty-one patients passed through the home, of whom only forty-two stayed the full year; of these thirty-three are doing well, seven failed, one died, and one cannot be traced. Forty-eight were married, and sixteen single. Out of that number thirty-nine had children, and had between them lost by death forty-nine of them. Here are figures which explain why the death roll of babies in our country is so long.

All the patients are not poor. There are two houses for wealthier women, who pay on two different scales for their treatment. And if 'Vanity Fair' is anywhere near the truth in its statements, I am not surprised that places of retirement for the wealthy are needed. In an article in that paper, not by the way a teetotal journal, it is asserted that stimulant-taking by women is alarmingly on the increase. The woman of fashion who flutters from one ball and party to another can only keep going by constant pick-me-ups and glasses of champagne. There can, I am afraid, be no doubt that the quiet use of stimulants is growing among the upper class of women. It is the tragedy of the modern-making methods of living that stimulants become a necessity to women who pursue pleasure (*sic*) until it becomes

hard labour. Our hope all along the line of difficulties lies in a return to simpler, calmer, purer lives.

* * * * * *

Defunct Jokes. There are some jokes which are really extinct, and should be given decent burial. I don't mean the comic old gentleman's pleasantries which often border on the coarse and are a relic of earlier days and tastes which will die hard. I don't mean the obscene hilariousness which belongs by right to the tap-room, but strays by chance into the streets to offend the decent ear of the passer-by. This belongs to a species inherent in the low class mind, which is not necessarily the mind of the poorer classes. And, until this mind is mended or ended, this species of joke, fun, wit—call it what you will—will not be bettered nor will it die.

But there is a joke, which is, in fact, a sneer which is propagated by halfpenny comic journals, lapsed into occasionally by decent journals, and used and quoted as wit by the young man who wishes to shine as a comic social light, though he may be otherwise unobjectionable.

For instance, for years the mother-in-law joke has flourished. It probably started in quite select circles in prehistoric times. But it has had its day, done its work, though it has not quite ceased to be. It is still, I am quite surprised to find, carrying on a lively existence in the cheap comic paper. But I thankfully acknowledge it is buried, though not in a very deep vault, by the upper class of journal. Then there is the suburban joke. It had such a vogue that it constructed for itself a substantive—'Suburbia.' Everything doubtful, everything cheap and nasty, everything underbred and trivial, had its home in 'Suburbia.' Nothing suburban could be right. No good could come out of the suburbs. Hampstead, the home of so much that was obviously of the first class, began to give the lie to these cheap sneers. Highgate, where poets had lived, painfully suggested that exceptions to the universal anathema might be possible. And gradually it has come to be discovered that human nature is much the same all the world over, even in the provinces. That the trivial and the great are bound together in every home. That the good lost in one place may be found in another, and that all the good and great do not necessarily congregate in a two-mile radius of Hyde Park corner.

But the third of the species seems longest a-dying, and takes its living most seriously. And that is the New Woman joke.

When in doubt, the leader writer and the paragraphist plays the New Woman. He is sure of a laugh, a senseless, meaningless laugh maybe, nearly related to a sneer. But where is the point of this well-worn phrase. Who is the New Woman? Forsooth I cannot tell. Twenty or thirty years ago she was popularly supposed to hanker for a University education and a vote. Both these she has—that is, she has all votes except for a candidate for parliament—and she is no longer a New Woman, but an ordinarily well-informed gentlewoman. A woman who rode a bicycle would, ten years ago, have served to point the moral, and adorn the caricature of the New Woman. Now she is a common object—no offence intended—and is taken for granted. The same thing applies to women who take an interest in politics, women who assist in the nation's housekeeping as guardians of the poor. So that we are driven to the conclusion that any woman who does, or desires to do, anything which all other women do not desire to do at that particular time is a new woman. And as such must be caricatured, and made the lawful butt of cheap wit. Let these and all such worn-out witticisms die, and *requiescant in pace.*

* * * * * *

Melodrama in Real Life. There are more ways it seems of getting rid of a wife than by murdering her. One way is for the husband to commit suicide himself. Of course under ordinary circumstances he would not live to enjoy his freedom, but a gentleman of a melodramatic turn of mind has discovered a method of doing both. He explained his scheme lately in Blackburn police-court. The court was convulsed at the discovery. The gentleman, John Wareham by name, desiring no longer to be burdened with his wife had sent her a farewell letter insinuating suicide. It ended, 'I have much'—here the writer broke off, and added in brackets the words:—'he did not live to finish the sentence. The gun flashed, the ball penetrated his brain, and he fell dead without a struggle.' Despite this tragic occurrence, John Wareham was ordered to maintain his wife. This is the penny novelette, and cheap melodrama translated into real life with a vengeance.

* * * * * *

The Problem of Living. In all large towns the single lady—by which I mean the lady living singly—is at an enormous disadvantage. This is not a soliloquy on the desirability of marriage. I

am not a stage heroine who soliloquises on all important occasions aloud and to an audience. I am merely struck by the difficulties a girl or woman of moderate middle-class means, drawn from a modest competency or her own profession, meets in finding a place to live in. There are vast numbers of lodgings always to be procured. But she wants home, not lodgings. Whole houses are too expensive, or entail too much responsibility. Half houses in desirable neighbourhoods with desirable neighbours are difficult to obtain. Flats have been built to some extent in London as associated dwellings for ladies. These are an attempt to meet the difficulty. But about these there is always an institution flavour. There are rules and regulations, and each inhabitant makes it her business to learn what every other inhabitant has, or is, or wishes to be. If a visitor of the other sex is entertained, excitement rises, and imagination trips lightly over obstacles in constructing airy romances.

But one such experiment at providing what is really wanted seems to have been wholly successful—Professor Geddes's settlement in Edinburgh. Professor Geddes's profession is not nominally that of a landlord, but he has been eminently successful as such. In the first place, the scheme is a financial success; it paid four and a half per cent. last year, and that removes from it any suspicion of a charitable institution. Secondly, although not under the same roof, the settlement houses both men and women. And that does something to remove from the atmosphere that tame cat or wild boar air which—hush! I say it below my breath and only then because my attic window is at such a safe distance from the rest of the world—is apt to pervade purely feminine or purely masculine communities.

It is not good for woman to dwell alone. This is a revised, but equally true version of the old dictum. It is good for a woman and for a man to exchange ideas, to catch the point of view of the other sex. I know I am speaking the truth, when I say that hundreds of cultured women, young and elderly, living wholly among their own sex, all over the country, long for the occasional society of a man, who is a man and not a fool. They would not say it for worlds, except at twilight, to their greatest friends. But no one can deny it. They do not want to flirt; they do not necessarily want to marry. But they are human enough; womanly enough to want to be broad-minded and see life, and all its interests from other points of view. But as things are at present arranged for single women,

especially single women of the cultured, cultivated, educated middle class, obliged to live alone, they cannot. Another element of the Edinburgh experiment, which helps to make it a success, is that the inhabitants are almost all of the same class; men and women interested, if not actually engaged, in educational or literary work.

Professor Geddes was explaining his scheme to a small London audience the other day. If London, and Manchester, and Liverpool, and many smaller towns were to try something of the same sort of scheme, life would be a different thing to large numbers of women and men too.

ANNIE GROSER HURD.

The China Cupboard.

ARRANGED BY CHELSEA CHINA.

(*For the regulations of all 'Monthly Packet' Competitions, see p.* 600.)

FIRST SHELF.

We hope our readers have made a good response to the appeal inserted last month for a Memorial Scholarship at Winchester High School, to be subscribed for by the admirers of Miss Charlotte Yonge.

First, it is good to think that one whom we delight to honour should *know* of the honour done to her, therefore it is well that a 'Memorial' should begin in the lifetime of the person to be remembered. Secondly, this is a thing to last for many generations. There will, we hope, be a 'Charlotte Yonge' scholar at Oxford and Cambridge for many a long day. Thirdly, when we remember how much the object of the memorial did, long ago, to stir up idle girls to make use of their talents, it is delightful to feel how this scheme links the past with the present, and gives the sanction of an honoured name to the more recent developments of women's higher education. Winchester *College* is, we suppose, one of the oldest educational foundations in England, and Winchester *High School* one of the youngest; but each sprang up to meet a need of its day, and was founded and is carried on in the same spirit. Let us hope that the 'Charlotte Yonge Scholarship' will keep the name of the little sister alive through as many generations of university life as, by many a noble foundation, has been kept that of her great elder brother honoured and shining. The American Minister, Hon. John Hay, has just added his name to the list.*

VARIETY SUBJECT.

SUBJECT FOR MARCH.

Favourites, with reasons.

The sets of favourites have been interesting and very various. With the exception of King Alfred, there has been hardly a duplicate. The prize must, of course, be assigned, not to the choice, but to the neat expression of the reasons for it. This has, Chelsea China thinks, been best done by *Nora*, who therefore takes the prize, but the sets of favourites are given, as comparison is interesting.

Tantallon. Robert Clay (Soldiers of Fortune). Montrose. Courage.

* Donations, either large or small (cheques and postal orders to be crossed), may be paid to the 'Charlotte Yonge Scholarship' Fund, at the London and County Bank, Winchester (or at any branch of this Bank), or to the Hon. Treasurer, the Rev. J. H. Merriott, Dormy Cottage, Winchester.

Study of the making up of Contemporary History. 'Gentleness and Cheerfulness, these come before morality; these are the perfect virtues.'

E.C.D. Ivanhoe. Wellington. Courage. Farming. Hunting. 'Deeds not Words.'

Doronicum. Guy Oscard. S. F. de Sales. Patience. Sketching. Sitting in shade nursing kitten. "Uphill," C. Rossetti.

Spectacles. Mrs. Leigh of Burrough. Bishop Ken. Patience. Needlework. Chess. 'He that toils for men's well done will never attain to God's.'

Skena Vaw. Dobbin. King Alfred. Self-control. Reading. Cycling. 'Then welcome each rebuff, That turns each's smoothness rough.'

L.E.D. Conyngham (In Kedar's Tents). Alfred. Generosity. Sketching. Sightseeing. 'Godliness with contentment is great gain.'

Hay. Colonel de Craie (The Egoist). Mirabeau. Patriotism. Teaching boys in Sunday-school. Conversation. 'Unborn to-morrow and dead yesterday, Why fret about them if to-day be sweet.'

Scotland Yard. Rosalind. Sir Galahad. Contentment. Music. Skating. 'Le Bonheur c'est d'être né joyeuæ.'

E.V.B. King Arthur. Mary Tudor. Loyalty. Driving pony cart in high wind. Search questioning in a hammock. 'Die Ehre ist das Salz in der Speise des Lebens obne sie ist das Dasein "ode and schal."'

Irene. Ethel May. King Alfred. Unselfishness. Sewing. Dancing. 'Be the day weary or be the day long, At length it ringeth to Evensong.'

Peter. Strafford. Amyas Leigh. Unselfishness. Needlework. Going to the play. 'Non nobis tantam nati.'

Einsam. Bendel (in Peter Schlemihl). Savonarola. Love. Amusing children. Part singing. 'Heaven's light for ever shines, Earth's shadows fly.'

Wild Rose. Pete (in the Manxman). Mary Queen of Scots. Truthfulness. Reading. A good play. 'Do unto others as you would they should do unto you.'

Holly Leaf. Tom Pinch. Lady Jane Grey. Tact. Literary Research. Looking for shells. 'One man's meat is another man's poison.'

Undine. My reigning favourite at sixteen. The one just going to be invented. Fair Play. Doing nothing. Having nothing to do. 'It takes all sorts to make a world.'

---

1. Favourite character (fictitious). *Hamlet*, if by 'favourite' is meant the character one loves best in fiction. We love what we love more than we admire what we admire, it always seems to me; and one could never imagine one's self *bored* by Hamlet.

2. Favourite character (historical). *Sir Philip Sidney.*—Because, though there have been many greater men, there have been few more lovable. Among the heroes of the past there are those whom one would sooner *see*, but none one would gladlier *know*. If a second 'hero' was allowed. I should like to bracket with the name above that of John Nicholson.

3. Favourite virtue. *Lovingkindness*, which seems to me to mean a combination of gentleness and generosity, very much in fact what St. Paul meant by 'charity,' but more of a special *virtue*—the outward and visible side of love, so to speak.

4. Occupation. *Making things.*—Whether it happens to be frocks, cakes, copper trays, essays, or mud-pies does not matter much. There is a joy in making, producing something, as long as it is satisfactory of its kind (by satisfactory, I don't mean perfect!) quite apart from the kind of thing made.

5. Amusement. *Riding* (a bicycle, failing a horse) and *Conversation.*—The former because it means movement and fresh air; the latter, well, I suppose, because of my sex? Let the circumstances be favourable, and there is nothing pleasanter than talking and being talked to—in proper proportions.

6. Quotation or Proverb. 'Let us take hands and help, for to-day we are alive together.'—Because these words (of the late Prof. Clifford), seem to me to express at once the hope of labour and the soul of comradeship.—NORA.

PRIZE WINNER FOR MARCH.

Miss A. C. Shipton, Grove Rectory, Retford.

SUBJECT FOR MAY.

The Garden Wall, and what you can find on it.

SECOND SHELF.

STUDIES OF CHARACTER.

SUBJECT FOR MARCH.

A Pony.

THAT pet ponies have 'more character than conduct,' as some one says of them, is abundantly proved by these studies. Little beasts, shaggy and sweet, but devoid of any sense either of duty or of shame, have evidently fastened themselves upon the affections of their owners. *Robin* appears to Chelsea China almost super-equine; but it is well known that there is something occult about a piebald. It is exceedingly difficult to choose among these fascinating sinners. May their little fat shadows never be less, and may the bicycle never be preferred before them! Chelsea China was about to remark that there must be a dull kind of saneness about a bicycle in comparison with a *Punch*, a *Pixie*, or a *Robin*. She was about to say that a bicycle cannot run away, or refuse to be mounted, or kick, or stop of its own accord and refuse to go on; but on consideration she is not sure whether it is not possible for a 'bike' to do all of these things. It can certainly cast a shoe, and go lame, and break its knees *and* those of its rider! But as for its affording more healthy exercise, why, if you get out to save the pony up every hill, and then again to lead him down, and if you whip him as much as he requires, and catch him when he runs away, why, where *is* the superiority of the bicycle in that respect?

If, after much consideration, Chelsea China has assigned the prize to *Thames Valley*, it *may* be because of the stern realism of her description, or it may be because her chosen pony recalls an old acquaintance to Chelsea China's mind, much as she admires the more ideal villains. Our readers will certainly also like to make the acquaintance of *Frank* and *Robin*, and we wish we had space for *Yorick* also.

A Pony.

He was our first, the outcome of many consultations, hopes, and longings, which had ended in the momentous decision that we would start, not a humble donkey, as was at first suggested, but a pony.

We were all very ignorant about horses, and thought ourselves very wise; and we had a fixed impression that all horse-dealers were terribly dishonest men, who would swindle you as soon as look at you, which, perhaps, was

the reason we bought our first pony of the local fishmonger, who was not given to cheating more than any one else in an ordinary way.

The animal was brought up for inspection, and drooped his head mournfully in the middle of the drive, while we walked round him and looked at his knees (which were broken), and the fishmonger dwelt on his virtues, and (which impressed us much more) ingenuously owned to his *one* fault of stumbling down hill.

We said there were no hills about this country, so that did not matter if he was quiet—and he was, very quiet—I don't think an earthquake would have startled that pony. He did not bolt or shy, which mother said was a great thing, and he was not bad looking on the whole. So we bought him, and started out in pride on long drives, and only felt sorry that every one could not be out to look at us.

It took us some little time to admit he had failings.

I had begun to drive him with conscientious scruples lest I should 'spoil his mouth!' unfortunately, it was long past spoiling. The fishmonger's boy, whom we consulted, explained you had to saw at it all the time with the bit. We did not feel equal to this, so we tried kindness, hoping that would do instead, but (in spite of S.P.C.A. books to the contrary) gratitude was unknown to that pony, and he only took a base advantage of our kindness.

We became desperate after a time. I don't know how many whips we wore out over him—they were the stoutest we could get—but at last we took to *standing up* to him, coster fashion, and getting him along that way. When this was impossible, we sat and tried to look dignified, and as if we wished to walk through the middle of the village at a funeral pace, with the bit dragged half through his mouth, and his heavy head hanging on one rein. We had learnt to mildly but firmly combat his sagacious and persistent endeavours to draw up at most of the public-houses along the road. But things came to a crisis one day, driving back from a garden party, when he insisted on walking the whole length of a very long drive with a dog-cart full of smart people fretting and fuming vainly behind us, and absolutely refused to quicken his pace for any amount of whacking. That sealed his fate. We found him a comfortable home, which was more than he deserved, and never heard of him again.

But the fishmonger still touches his cap to us (though we don't deal with him), either out of irony or a sense of gratitude for the excellent bargain he made.—THAMES VALLEY.

A Pony.

He is quite an old pony, and like most animals of mature age has a very strong will of his own. He is a light bay with one white foot and a white blaze down his face, and he stands about 14½ hands high. In the winter, when clipped for the first time, he becomes a sort of salmon pink colour, so that our friends are apt to think that we have got a new pony. He goes by the name of Frank, in honour of a former master, and would probably be described in an advertisement as 'a quiet and confidential cob.' Though he is very self-willed, he is thoroughly conscientious, and never indulges in tricks or capers when any harm could possibly come of them, but reserves them for occasions when he has the road pretty much to himself. In fact, like the people in Ruddigore, 'he only cuts respectable capers.'

He has a wonderfully strong memory for any house where he has once been put up, and if his driver is uncertain which turn to take, he may safely be left to decide for himself, and is sure to find the right place. He has a rooted objection to standing anywhere, but always tries to make for the nearest stable known to him. Now that he is getting old, he prefers only to go distances of three or four miles, and then, when on his way home, tries to pretend that he is a young colt again, and unless kept very well in hand will set off for some distance at a gallop. However, he knows his duty so well

that one need never be under any apprehension that he will really run away, and after pulling very hard for a time he settles down into a good round trot.

But if we are going a long distance, and he is not quite sure how far we mean to take him, then his paces are very different. On such occasions, especially if the road is new to him, he is as sulky and obstinate as any old donkey, tries all the time to take the carriage into the left-hand ditch, and plainly shows his disapproval of our proceedings. When he arrives at a village with which he is not acquainted, he begins to whinny at the first sight of houses, looks about for the one that offers the best prospect of a good stable, and tries to turn in at the gate, and most indignant he is if not allowed to do so. In his young days he was a very good jumper, and was constantly ridden to the meets; and the memory of former days is still so strong within him that if we chance to fall in with the hounds while driving, he gets highly excited and wishes to follow them carriage and all.

One of his most tiresome propensities is his habit of neighing if another horse is in front of him, so that sometimes when driving through a town he announces our approach so loudly as to cause much amusement among the passers-by. He is not very amiable if we go to visit him in the stable, and does not care to be petted, but he is very docile with those who have the care of him, and recognises an old friend after many months' absence. Some time ago a boy came to see us who had formerly been in our stable, and he told us that he was sure Frank knew him again, 'for he laid back his ears and laughed at me just as he used to do.'

In spite of his eccentricities (or perhaps partly on account of them) we are very much attached to our old pony, and dread the day when he will no longer be able to work, for we shall find it very difficult to fill his place, and when he dies we shall feel inclined to echo Fitz James's sentiments, and exclaim—

'Woe worth the day
That costs thy life my gallant bay.'

CENTAUR.

A Pony.

'Please 'm the pony's come,' were the words that greeted us one afternoon as we came in from a walk, so we went to the stable-yard to see our new purchase. He was quite young, and looked decidedly 'knowing,' carried himself with a jaunty air, and, being pie-bald, with the biggest patch of colour on his chest, we dubbed him Robin on the spot. The following morning my saddle was put on his back, and I went for the first of many delightful rides on him. He carried me perfectly, and seemed to enjoy himself quite as much as I did. Up hill, down dale, into the nearest town, or over the moors, or straight across country we went; no fence or ditch daunted him, and not even an engine would make him shy when I was on his back. If I rode with others, he always insisted on being first, no matter how much bigger the others might be, he would get ahead of them, and kept his place in front throughout the ride. If I rode alone, he required no urging, and went with a spirit that was truly delightful. For many weeks after we first had him, he was taken every morning to water at a pond, and was led past the house from the stable. I used to be sitting in the window, and would put my head out and call to him, and when I spoke he always looked up at me and replied with a gentle whinnie. After some time I went away for a while, and I was told that the morning after my departure, when he was led out to water, he looked up at the window where he was accustomed to see me, and, seeing no one, he whinnied twice, then stood stock still and whinnied louder. The man who led him tried to get him past, but could not; there was no holding him. Up the grassy bank that

divided the house from the road scrambled Robin, and, the window being open as usual, he put his head in and whinnied loudly, but when he found I was not there, he turned away and went slowly on to the pond and back to the stable. He was afterwards turned out into a field, and there he stayed till I came back, for no one could catch him; no corn would entice him, and though they all tried, and spent hours trying, it was no use. Robin refused to be caught, they said. I went down to the field to have a look at him, and, when I got to the gate, I called him. He looked up quickly when he heard my voice, and when I called 'Robin' the second time he whinnied, trotted straight up to me, and rubbed his nose against my arm. I had taken no corn or anything to entice him, but he followed me like a dog to the stable, and, when we arrived there, he stopped short in front of the corn bin, rubbed his nose against it, and gave a gentle little whinnie, as much as to say 'please.'

Though he was so perfectly good with me, I must confess he did not behave well with others. Men he disliked, boys he simply hated, and nothing would induce him to carry either. He allowed them to get on, but not to stay there; he would go a few yards all right, and then suddenly up went his heels! If kicking was not sufficient, he bucked, and if that did not effect the desired end he rolled! I once lent him to a gentleman (who knew his eccentricities by report, but I don't think quite believed in them), he had been accustomed to horses all his life, had ridden all sorts, and I knew would treat Robin well, but he quickly returned him home again, and afterwards spoke of him as a 'little beast!'

He carried me so well we never thought of parting with him, till a time came when we had to leave the country for the town, and just then we had an offer for him through a friend, so Robin was sold. We heard some time afterwards that his new owners could do nothing with him, for he declined to carry any of them; even the lady who mounted him was quickly dislodged. No new mistress took the place of his old one in his affections, and I think he felt for me the same love and regret I felt for him.—LOWNA.

PRIZE WINNER FOR MARCH.

Miss Scott, St. Saviour's Vicarage, Sunbury Common S.O., Middlesex.

CLASS LIST FOR MARCH.

DISTINCTION.—*Centaur, Lowna, Nora, Alicks.*

CLASS I.

Miranda, Try Again, Truda, Uan, E. V. B., Einsam, Holly Leaf, Pixie, Punch.

CLASS II.

Lindum, Taffy, Irene, Scotland Yard, Lag-last.

CHARACTER STUDY FOR MAY.

One of the old school.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR MARCH.

(*All about one Flower.*)

1. Who said—

'*They*
Came before the swallow dares and fill
The winds of March with beauty'?

2. For what purpose were our flowers called upon to 'fill their cups with tears'?

3. (*a*) Who looked like one of these flowers in her college gown? (*b*) How were the stars when this 'shining' flower died?

4. Who said that we 'weep to see' our flowers 'haste away so soon'?

5. Whose heart filled with pleasure and danced with these flowers?

6. A quotation on this flower. (Marks according to merit.)

ANSWERS TO MARCH QUESTIONS.

(*All about Daffodils*).

1. Perdita (SHAKSPERE, 'A Winter's Tale,' act iii. sc. 3).

2. 'To strow the laureat herse where Lycid lies' (MILTON, 'Lycidas').

3. (*a*) Melissa (TENNYSON, 'The Princess,' part ii.).

(*b*)

'The charioteer
And starry Gemini hang like glorious crowns
Over Orion's grave low down in the west,
. . . and pointed to Mars,
As he glow'd like a ruddy shield on the lion's breast.'

(TENNYSON, 'Maud,' iii. 6, 1.

4. HERRICK ('To daffodills').

5. WORDSWORTH'S ('I wandered lonely as a cloud').

6. *Chelsea China* owes her competitors thanks for several charming quotations on the daffodil, some unknown to or forgotten by her. The ones she likes best are JEAN INGELOW'S from 'Persephone,' CHRISTINA ROSSETTI'S 'Child's Song,' and SWINBURNE'S 'A Child's Battle,' of which the following are a few lines :—

'Erect, a fighting flower,
It breasts the breeziest hour
That ever blew.
. . . . . .
For all the storm saith, still
Stout stands the daffodil.'

Also AUBREY DE VERE'S 'Ode to the Daffodil,' too long to quote, and a very pretty prose passage from PARKINSON'S 'Earthly Paradise.' Some competitors wish to know what constitutes 'merit' in such an answer as this. Of course, the poetical beauty of the lines is much considered; but it is of primary importance that they really are upon the subject, and do not only contain a passing reference to it. For instance, a list of flowers including the name of daffodil, and saying no more about it, has very little merit, while even Shakspere's lines, 'When daffodils begin to peer,' however beautiful in themselves, cannot be considered as good for this purpose as any of those mentioned above. Different verses of JEAN INGELOW'S poem have been given by various competitors, and these are marked differently, as the lines describing the flower must count before those which simply give its name.

Ans. 1. By some mistake, the word 'fill' was printed instead of 'take.'

Ans. 3 (*b*) Many competitors have failed to give the right quotation, only giving the words (from another part of 'Maud'), 'Orion low in his grave.' These, only giving the position of one constellation, cannot receive so many marks as those quoted above.

MARKS FOR MARCH.

60: *Bog-Myrtle, Double-Dummy, Honeylands, K. S. M., Lenore, The Blue Cat.* 49: *Dianora, White Cat.* 58: *A. E. L., All-Fours, Cobwebs, Eleanor,*

Irnham, Melton Mowbray, Nemo. 57 : *E. V. B., Findhorn, Gruffanuff, Syndicate, W. Adey.* 56 : *Isabel, Isolda, M. R. A., No.* 13, *Otter, Swallow, Trimmer.* 55 : *Cymraes, Gil, Hay, Helen.* 54 : *Aspley Guise, Athena, Holly Leaf, Kittiwake, Nevil, Thorshaven.* 53 : *Blue Wings, R. V. H., Sophonisba.* 52 : *P. S. Millard.* 51 : *A. C. R., Bice, Sea-Maiden, W. Spurling.* 50 : *Daisy, Malaprop.* 49 : *Sintram.* 46 : Ἐγκράτεια. 45 : *E. T., Proserphina.* 43 : *Iona.* 42 : *F. J. A.* 36 : *Scotland Yard.*

Fourteen Streams is credited with 60 marks for January, and 50 for February.

F. R. D. omitted to write 'Search Questions' on her envelope, and cannot be credited.

Daisy.—Asphodel is not the same flower as daffodil, so your quotation will not suit.

Syndicate is credited with 50 marks for February.

Honeylands.—You are credited 'for this once!'

Peter.—*L. J. H.* wrongly addressed.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR MAY.

TITLES.

1. Explain in a few words the meaning of the title, 'The Ring and the Book.'

2. From what sources are the following titles taken?—(1) 'Not wisely, but too well,' (2) 'The Course of True Love,' (3) 'A Woman's Reason.'

3. What did Kingsley mean by the titles (*a*) 'Westward Ho!' (*b*) 'Two Years Ago'?

4. To what do the following allude?—(1) 'A Giant's Robe,' (2) 'In Silk Attire,' (3) 'Grasp your Nettle.' Name the authors of the books so called.

5. (*a*) 'A Tale of Two Cities.' What were the two cities, and who told the tale?

(*b*) 'Below the Salt.' To what custom does this refer?

6. What do you consider the happiest (most suitable) title ever given to a book, poem, or play?

Only one allowed to each person.

NOTICE.—Answers (to SEARCH QUESTIONS only) to be sent by the 25th of each month to *Miss Pridham, Westmoreland Lodge, Wimbledon Park, Wimbledon.* 'Search Questions' to be written outside the envelope. All other competitions as usual.

THIRD SHELF.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

CHELSEA CHINA hopes that it is unnecessary to remind any competitor that the answers to SEARCH QUESTIONS set in one magazine must NEVER be sought for by queries in another.

QUERY.

Wanted.—Explanation or legend connected with the Scottish song, 'The bonnie banks of Loch Lomond.' The chorus is—

'Oh, ye'll tak' the high road, and I'll tak' the low road,
And I'll be in Scotland afore ye;
But me and my true love will never meet again
On the bonnie, bonnie banks of Loch Lomon'.'

D. J. ATTLEE.

ANSWERS.

For *Lambda.* I should have sent these before, bnt I thought a very large number would surely be sent. These are all I know for *days.*

1. When Janiveer calends are summerly gay
There's winterly weather till calends of May.
2. If Candlemas day be fair and bright,
Winter will have another flight.
If on Candlemas day it be shower and rain,
Winter is gone; he will not come again.

3. On Valentine's day will a good goose lay.
4. Saint Matthei sends sap into the tree.
5. If there is plenty of grass on the twelfth of April, sell a cow; if there is none, buy one. (A Cheshire proverb.)

6. If the first of July it be rainy weather,
'Twill rain more or less for four weeks together.
7. If the twenty-fourth of August be fair and clear,
Then hope for a prosperous autumn that year.

8. A light Christmas, a heavy sheaf.

There are more for the *months,* such as

Who oats in Janiveer doth sow
Of gold and groats will have enow.

And

February fill dyke,
Be it black or be it white;
But if it be white
It's the better to like.

I could write them out if *Lambda* wishes for them.—M.K.S.

SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.

CENTRAL AFRICA—UNIVERSITIES MISSION.

QUESTIONS FOR MAY.

1. Give an account of *East African* slavery.
2. Tell the story of the building of Christ Church, Zanzibar.
3. Draw a map of the present field of U.M.C.A. Mission (size of foolscap page). *The map may be copied all except the Mission stations, which must be put in from memory.*
4. On what terms does this Mission engage its Missionaries? Give an account of six workers (not *Bishops*), choosing successively one to illustrate at least part of each of the following periods—(α) 1861–68, (β) 1868–74, (γ) 1874–80, (δ) 1880–86, (ε) 1886–92, (ζ) 1892–98. Books recommended:—*History of the Universities Union;* Thornton's *Africa Waiting; Life of Arthur Fraser Sim,* 3*s.* 6*d.* Office of U.M.C.A., 9, Dartmouth Street. *Diary of a Working Man,* 1*s.* 5*d.*; from office U.M.C.A.

Answers to be sent to Bogoak, Industrial School, Andover, by June 1st.

FEBRUARY CLASS LIST.

CLASS I.

M. P., 50; *Ierne*, 36; *Musidora*, 31; *Veritas*, 30.

CLASS II.

Constans et Zidelis, 29; *Klondyke*, 27; *Maiden Aunt* (three answers), 23. Emens (one answer), 10.

REMARKS.

5. VOCATION—calling, and must include—
(1) *The call of God* to the individual. 'Thou art a chosen vessel unto Me to bear My Name.' This covers 'circumstances,' and interior fitness—piety. He calls none unfit, or whose circumstances cannot be overcome. (2) *The call of the Church:* 'It seemed good unto us to send chosen men.' Includes exterior fitness, aptitude, gifts, and perhaps approval of friends. Of all these the Church's authorities may judge. (3) *The call of the Heathen.* 'Come over into Macedonia.' This call coming through sermon, book, or letter, or individual, fixes the special field, and includes what Maclear calls 'inclination.' HINDRANCES: self-will, self-conceit, self-indulgence, opposition of friends, carelessness of health, unfit choice of field. HELPS: prayer, study, training in special ways, *e.g.* language, arts.

6. Bishop of Grahamstown well done; but some know little of Nathaniel James Merriman, third Bishop. Like his namesake without guile, he had a clear vision of right and wrong. Hé won the confidence of Kafirs in return for his intense vigorous sympathy.

7. A hundred Christian Kafirs to one were the proportion who remained true to us, and to Christian civilisation in 1872, but Edmund Sandili and a few joined the rebels. Sir G. Grey's 'plan' was applying imperial and colonial funds to civilise Kafirs (as less costly than armed forces to over-awe them), if the Church would co-operate by supplying the mission staff to teach and christianise.

8. Tristan d'Acunha proves more interesting than St. Helena. The South American congregations were never a part of the jurisdiction of the Bishop of St. Helena except in theory.

A MOUNTAIN.

Character is sometimes defined as the settled qualities of a thing; but beautiful, fascinating, capricious 'Frau,' experience decides that a settled unsettledness best describes your character.

When first we saw her, her feet were shod in corn-marigolds and spurrey. She wore a petticoat of furze and bracken; climbing about her steep knees were little lads, gathering the bracken into huge bundles, which they set rolling down a precipice into the valley below.

The Frau seemed to smile on these young toilers, the air was fragrant with the scent of the wild raspberries she grew to refresh their parched lips.

We clambered past her scarlet girdle of rowans, and were suddenly drenched in the Frau's angry tears, the rest of the world, as far as eye could reach, being bathed in golden sunshine.

After this first essay, many were the attempts to scale the Frau's stony heart and look at her face to face.

But she would have none of us. She had a trait peculiar to mountains, being many feet longer than high. She was shorter than Snowdon; and yet we have walked miles on her and not reached the top.

Alas! we never reached the top. Once we climbed higher than we had ever been, skirting many a false head of the mountain, when we came upon a beauty of the Frau hitherto unseen by us, namely, green lengths of the stag-moss.

We were trying who could find the longest spray, when the Frau resented the liberties we were taking; she hurtled large hailstones at us, umbrellas were broken, crowns and brims of hats parted company, and we returned to our homes in rags and tags, like the beggars coming to town.

Another time hope sang in our hearts, so nearly had we reached the top. Dressed in the nearest approach to bathing-gowns and shawls that custom permits, we feared neither wind nor rain.

We had successfully crossed a bog, a new delightful revelation of the Frau, covered with snowy plumes of cotton-grass, and had only one precipitous ridge to travel over before reaching the Frau's proud crest. Of course, she began to cry, but we cared not, and walked boldly on; then she played her winning trick—she hid herself in clouds of mist, and sent waves of it rolling towards us.

The young and ardent amongst us would fain have gone on, nothing daunted; but the voice of prudence prevailed, to be lost on the Frau was not to be desired, so again we had to retreat.

But when next the fascination of the Frau draws us to her feet, may she be the vanquished one.—WINIFRED SPURLING.

'LE DIABLERIE.'

Do you know the Diablerie, with its white, white cones standing up against the sky—deep rich blue, pale amber, and angry purple, or perhaps the soft tints of reflected sunset? And do you know how those white fields, those soft pillows and drifts, those icy caverns where wild bitter winds sweep and howl, are peopled with mischievous spirits, two bands of impish 'Diables,' who unceasingly through the ages try to throw the crumbling mountain rock down on the innocent people of the valley below? One tiny army strives to hurl the boulders into the Canton de Valais, and the other on the Canton de Vaud, and to this mutinous end they have struggled since time began.

Then when spring comes in the mountains, have you seen the brown-pastured hills, blue as the sky with gentian, and sweet valleys carpeted with violets, while high up the white peaks smile, bright and cool, and if it be early morning, transparent mists hang over them like torn filmy cobwebs, shadowing and toning the far snowland where avalanches begin to roar?

Beautiful as the morning—and the morning is ever beautiful, but it is seldom more purely bright than when the first gold streams over those far white peaks, and flooding up, lights point after point, flashing with a brilliance of rubies, westward, northward, southward, till we would fain think of that city whereof the streets are 'gold, like unto transparent glass,' and the foundations are of jacinth, sapphire, emerald.—DAUGHTER OF THE SOIL.

'MONTHLY PACKET' NOTICES.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The readers of the 'Monthly Packet' are invited to address CHELSEA CHINA on any subject the discussion of which occurs to them as likely to interest others, especially in connection with articles appearing in the Magazine.

CHINA CUPBOARD PRIZES—

A. *Variety Specimens.* Prize, monthly, 5*s.*

Search Questions (*Who, When, and Where*). Prize, for six months taken together, £1 1*s.*

Prose Competition. Monthly Prize, 5*s.*, or 10*s.*, according to merit.

RULES for the above—

(1) Papers must be sent by the 25th of each month, addressed to CHELSEA CHINA, care of Messrs. A. D. Innes & Co., Limited; they must NOT be addressed to 'the Editors.' (2) Each envelope must be marked *outside* with the subject to which it refers. Papers under separate competitions or discussions must be in separate envelopes. (3) The correspondent's name and address must be written on every paper: the use of a *nom de plume* for the lists is optional. (4) If competitors fail to comply with any rule, their papers will be disqualified. (5) The real name of the prize-winner is published in each case. (6) There are no entrance fees. (7) Prizes cannot be taken by the same person twice in a half-year.

PROVERB COMPETITION, 1898.

It appears to us that a set subject fails to attract authors of experience, or to elicit their best work. We therefore cordially invite stories for next year's Christmas Number to be sent in without limit of subject, to be chosen according to merit and paid for in the usual manner. The PROVERB COMPETITION is limited to authors under 25.

All stories not to exceed 10,000 words, to be sent in between June 1st and July 1st, 1898. Proverb stories to be headed PROVERB COMPETITION, CHRISTMAS NUMBER, outside the wrapper, other stories CHRISTMAS NUMBER only. Stamped cover or stamps to be enclosed for return.

Illustrate this quotation in a story—

> 'Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
> The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
> Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
> And, by opposing, end them.'

[*The Editors of the 'Monthly Packet' will feel obliged if All Contributors will write their names and addresses clearly on their MSS., and will enclose stamps for return. Unless these conditions are complied with, the Editors cannot undertake to preserve, return, or enter into correspondence about MSS. Much trouble is saved if accompanying letters are enclosed in the parcel instead of being sent separately.*

The utmost care is taken in returning MSS., but the Editors can only hold themselves absolutely responsible for such as are sent to them at their own request.]

THE MONTHLY PACKET.
NEW SERIES.

JUNE, 1898.

THE GOSPEL WRIT IN STEEL.

BY ARTHUR PATERSON, AUTHOR OF 'FATHER AND SON,' 'FOR FREEDOM'S SAKE,' ETC.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE bugle sounded at the first streak of dawn, and John felt on every side the stir of rousing men. He lay still for a minute, watching them. None wasted time in yawning or stretching themselves; there was not a grumble or growl; one and all they slipped from their blankets, drew on boots and uniforms, and started for work in silence. John soon followed and helped to get breakfast, devouring with the rest hard bread and the toughest of beef, washed down with muddy coffee.

'Our camp fare,' the sergeant said, watching John's struggles with the beef, 'has no fixins. We don't run to more on active service, and sometimes not as much.'

John smiled, and did his best to appear to enjoy his breakfast and eat as fast as the rest, but noticed with some annoyance that he was longer over the meal than any one else. Such appetite as he possessed was taken away by Mike Salter's announcement that the general would shortly be ready to see him.

John felt that his fate was to be decided this morning, and was not at all sure what turn affairs would take. He saw clearly that Lincoln's letter alone would not secure him the position he desired. Sherman, not Lincoln, was in command of the army here. Further, it was John's firm conviction that he had cut a sorry figure last night by answering literally the general's

question about Bull Run. His words, innocently meant, would be looked upon as barefaced impudence from a civilian. So John was not happy in his mind, and craved for active occupation. He was alone for the time being, and noticing that the pans and dishes were strewed about in confusion, proceeded to gather them together, and put everything in order, even to placing under the stove kindling for the next fire. He then settled himself down with his back against the tent, and drawing from his bag a map of Georgia, was soon engrossed with speculations concerning the probable route of the army. Last night the couriers had canvassed this vigorously among themselves, and John had stored away in his memory the names of the places which had been mentioned in the discussion. Now, spreading out the map on the ground before him, he took from his pocket a dozen pins with heads of grey and blue sealing wax, and began pricking out the present positions of the armies as far as he knew them. He was sublimely unconscious that General Sherman had strolled up unheard from behind, and was watching him.

'Dalton? Where is Dalton?' John muttered. 'That is where the Rebs are, under Jos Johnston. There'—sticking in a big grey-headed pin—'Now, the boys said we are to go for that position and drive them out, or better still, out-flank and crush them. How will Uncle Billy do it?' He drew from another pocket a pair of compasses, and began measuring. 'Twenty miles from Chattanooga'—in went a blue pin. 'But that is bee-line. The roads will be bad, they say, and are never straight. Two days' march. And we have three armies to move. General Thomas, with the army of the Cumberland, will start first, as he is at Cleveland. Where's Cleveland? There'—in went another blue pin. 'Down the Tennessee river he'll go, to Red Clay'—there a third pin marked the place. 'Yes—yes'—studying the effect—'simple to look at, but the country is difficult; forest and mountains and swamps. Enemy's country too, and Johnston, the old Reb, is a smart man—some say smarter than Lee. Uncle Billy will have his hands full. Now'—he took up a grey pin—'if Dalton is not held by the Rebs, where will Johnston go?—Resaca, it was remarked, Resaca.—there. 'That will mean retreat. Now, supposing he turned around upon our rear? What a mine of supplies he would find. He could not do it, I guess. Yet it is worth while to think how he might try.' He took up another grey pin, and was about to

plant it in the map, when Sherman moved involuntarily, and John discovered him. He sprang up horror-struck.

'Hand me that thing.'

The general spoke very quietly, and pointed to the map.

John picked it up, feeling like a schoolboy caught drawing caricatures in his exercise-book.

'This how you spend your time?'

'I was waiting for your orders, general.'

'How long have you had this map?'

'A month.'

'Any others in your bag? Show them to me.'

John's spirits fell to zero. It struck him that the general would imagine him to be the correspondent of some newspaper —a person peculiarly detested, he knew, by officers in the field. Yet he felt utterly unable to explain or defend himself, and obeyed the order in silence, taking out maps of Missouri, Tennessee, and Virginia. This last was pricked with innumerable pin-holes where John had followed the course of the army of the Potomac. Not a battle fought during the war but was located in these maps and showed the traces of pin points. Sherman examined them one by one, and folded them up.

'I will keep them awhile,' he said; 'this kind of property should not be lying around loose. It will be safer with me.'

He paused, and John saluted, not knowing what else to do.

'What have you been doing since I saw you?—anything?'

'No, general.' John would have given worlds to have had a different answer.

'Nothing but eat and sleep?'

'No, general.'

'That's a lie!' exclaimed a voice—Sergeant Hornber's.

'How is that?' said Sherman, turning sharply.

The sergeant, who had just come up, saluted and pointed to the pile of clean dishes and pans.

'Las' night, general, when you sent him here, he ramped round, working like two men, to help get supper in and chores done. This morning I slipped out and left every bit of this outfit in a dirty mess and muddle. I did it on purpose to see how he'd act. Look at it now! He will work, whatever there is to him besides.'

General Sherman looked from one man to the other.

'Don't you call that work, Burletson?'

'Not exactly, general.'

'Nor do I. Can he fight, Hornber?'

'Try him, general.'

'If I do it will be on your word.'

'I will give it every time.'

'Very well; put the thing through, then. It is not my idea of business, Burletson, taking a raw recruit, whose only recommendation is a letter from the President. I was in two minds this morning to send you back to Washington by the first empty freight. As for your prison scheme, I never heard such nonsense in my life. We shall not get within fifty miles of Santanelle. But I will take you as a courier, at your own risk, and chance it. You will have trouble to keep going. If you drop out, back you go to Wisconsin, if you can get there. Hornber, tell Lieutenant Snelling that by my order this man is attached to his command, and is to be supplied with necessary kit and horse. Mind—he is under your eye. I expect that before we start south you will have licked him into efficiency. We want no half-baked bread on this campaign.'

He turned on his heel with a nod, and Hornber struck John a huge slap on the back.

'By thunder, Burletson, you owe me two cocktails for this morning's work when we get to any liquor. You have slipped into what many a two years' man would give his soul for. Mark you, Uncle Billy has picked his army for this Georgia fandango, and the couriers—*our* couriers—are the pick of that. If you stand the racket you will be in the best of running; but if you fail with his eye upon you, blue blazes is not in it with the storm that will break on you.'

John did not see his maps again, but he did not miss them much. Work for twelve, fourteen, and sometimes eighteen hours out of the twenty-four was the order of the day. Lieutenant Snelling in command of the couriers, the smartest subaltern in the army, looked with little favour on the new recruit.

'Sherman has played it rather low on me,' he said to Hornber; 'an awkward heavy farm-help; why, he'll put a sore back on every horse he rides—if he can ride—and run clean away to the rear when he gets under fire. I don't like it.'

But the sergeant stood John's friend, and the Lieutenant presently found that his first apprehension at least was unfounded. There was no elegance in John's riding, it was true; but the big-limbed beast they chose for him, with a mouth like a steel trap

and the obstinacy of a government mule, soon discovered that it had found its master. 'Ye-es, he'll get along,' the lieutenant said, 'and p'r'aps keep his own skin safe; but I doubt if he will do much more.'

John was himself of the lieutenant's opinion when it was retailed to him by the friendly Mike; but he kept his ideas to himself, and only worked harder than ever. Half of every day he was put through severe cavalry drill, the rest of the time being sent on courier duty far and wide. Yet, hard as the work was, he enjoyed the life, and wrote cheerfully to his mother, receiving glowing letters in reply. Mrs. Burletson was brimming over with pride at the President's note, and prophesied for John a future of dazzling brilliance. He smiled at her words, but laid the letter down almost impatiently. It was strange that his mother, of all people, should think that he had volunteered to win glory and honour for himself. Surely she knew that while she lived the career of a soldier was not for him. Seth's release once secured, he would go home. Seth's safety was the beginning and end of his campaign; meanwhile he must do his duty. Sometimes John brooded over the risks he would soon begin to run, and then wondered whether he was a coward. But his mother's grief if he were killed troubled him more than his own danger. After all, she was well provided for as far as money went, and she had Jean, who would be a real daughter to her now.

John's training lasted until the first day of May, when the advance southward began. He had now to take his place as a soldier, and from earliest dawn until the last gleam of daylight was in the saddle. It was hard work. Sometimes he would lose his way in the forest and wander about for hours before he could find it again; or come unexpectedly upon a hidden swamp, into which his horse would plunge, to the imminent danger of both sinking hopelessly in the muddy slime. Often he would have to ride from sunrise to sunset without bite or sup under a blazing sun. He had to learn to take all such incidents as part of the day's work. Then there was the danger of falling into the enemy's hands, a thing to be avoided at all costs by couriers, lest the rebels should gain important news by deciphering the despatches. Over the camp fire at night the couriers told many a grim tale of hair-breadth escapes and of what captured men suffered in the southern prisons. The accounts were so revolting that John turned sceptical at once,

and was only convinced of their truth by a melancholy confirmation by Hornber. The sergeant knew of John's plans concerning Santanelle—told under promise of secrecy—and was hugely interested, though puzzled.

'I can't make out the kind of man you are,' he said one evening, 'not one little bit. Yet it is my business to try, for Uncle Billy's words stay by me all the while. What could bring a man fixed as you were in business to volunteer in just this way, that's what beats me. I cannot think why this one man int'rests you so powerfully. Some men might do it for fun. There's been cranks by the mile in our country since the war began; but you ain't one of that stock. Leastways, if you be, the rest of your machinery is put together in a wonderful way. Tell me what it is.'

But John laughed, and said he was too tired. Then they discussed the question of the hour.

Dalton, the position held by General Johnston, was just ahead. It had taken two weeks to do what John in his ignorance thought would be done in two days. But they were there at last, and the first real tussle of the campaign was at hand. In these discussions, in which all the couriers who happened to be awake took part, John was no longer a mere listener. His careful study of former campaigns gave him knowledge which the rest were quick to see. He seldom advanced an opinion without being asked, but when he had given his views he stuck to them tenaciously; arguments rarely beat his notion out of him. This, together with the zeal and diligence he put into his work, gave him a position in the corps, and few remembered that with it all he was a mere recruit, who had, so far, never been under fire. John himself, however, knew it well. The night before the first battle he slept little, thinking of the chances of the morrow; but the next morning he rose, as usual, before the rest, and was ready to face all that fate might bring. The first to rise, he was the first to report himself, and whether from this reason, or some other, he heard, to his great satisfaction, that he was to await orders from the commander-in-chief. Sherman looked at John with a sharp and critical eye as he handed him a letter.

'You will take this to General McPherson. Do you know where he is?'

'The Sugar Valley, general.'

'How long will it take you to get there?'

John made a rapid calculation of distances.

'Two hours, general.'

'You know your way?'

'I will find it.'

'See that you keep to time. How do you like it now?'

'First rate, general.'

'H'm, wait till you have smelt powder. You will do it to-day, and perhaps have little else to live on for a time. We shall see how you like that.'

John was piqued at the general's manner, and as he rode off to find Hornber, to ask the way to the Sugar Valley, he determined that, come what might, he would prove to Sherman that he was mistaken. Hornber was on the look out for him.

'How long will it take to ride to McPherson?' was John's first question.

He had answered the general to the best of his knowledge; but experience had taught him that distances were often deceptive.

'That's your job? Thunder! Uncle Billy's put you in for a tall contract this time, no mistake!'

'How long will it take me?'

'Depends. If you get there—I say *if*—you may calc'ate on a four or say five hours' run.'

John patted his horse's neck.

'We've to do it in two.'

Hornber gave a grunt of contempt.

'Two? Who said that?'

'I did. Sherman asked me. Afterwards he said it must be done in that time.'

'Sherman's—well, never mind. But I tell you it is impossible. The way to Sugar Valley is the worst to find anywhere round, and 'twill be swarming with Rebs. Why, it's twenty miles bee-line.'

'I know it; that's why I said two hours.'

'You were a fool,' was the rough answer. 'And your foolishness will likely be your death. Bee-line indeed! man, the Rebs are between us and McPherson. You'll have to go round miles, and then take a hundred chances. But this talk won't get you there. Got a compass?'

'I have.'

'Well, then, strike south-east direct for about five miles, until you come to timber. Then turn south, and hold to that course

till you make McPherson's lines. Bait your horse and yourself well first.'

John settled himself in his saddle.

'That will wait till we get there. Adios.'

He went off at a brisk hand gallop, while Hornber stood and cursed.

'Darned hard, I say. It *is* hard. Darn Uncle Billy! I never knew his like for driving a willing horse to death. Why don't he send trash on such an errand? There's nothing in that despatch. I'll swear there ain't. It is too bad to throw away the chances of such a one as John. Blast it all!'

John rode fast and straight; not too hard, for the horse must be spared at first, but without turning aside for obstacles, such as he would have carefully avoided the day before. Sherman's words still rankled, and he was in no pleasant mood. But he knew more than Hornber about the despatch, and was sure that its importance could not be exaggerated. There was some comfort in feeling that he had been entrusted with it.

The couriers in the American war were better posted concerning the enemy's movements than very many of their officers. Their work cultivated quickness of perception to the highest point, and they often heard orders given of which no one else was aware, but which they religiously communicated to each other. Thus John knew that McPherson, who had moved his division south of Dalton, was outflanking Johnston, and he shrewdly suspected that the despatch he bore was an order from Sherman to move forward at all speed and prevent the enemy from fortifying himself on the heights of Resaca, a few miles south. Very much might depend upon the early delivery of the note.

As John thought of all this he rode harder and harder. All went well for a few miles. His horse was fresh and powerful, the ground was hard and safe. Then came the turn to the south, and a change crept over everything. It was sultry weather, and the perspiration streamed from man and horse. John wondered whether he had urged his beast too hard. But his thoughts soon took another turn, for a breeze from the south bore with it a dull muttering sound. Was it thunder? No. John smiled at his mistake. It was the distant boom of artillery. Had any old friend seen John's face just now he would have observed it change in a curious way; the gentleness characteristic of the man even under the stress of sore trouble and affliction

had suddenly disappeared, while his eyes brightened, the outlines of the face hardened until they stood out square and prominent, and the lips closed tightly one upon another. The sound of those guns had changed John from a peaceful farmer to a fighter keen as the blade of the sword he wore. John's horse knew this, for his rider pressed his sides with a sudden grip and pricked him sharply with the spur which he had not used before. The way grew tiresome and difficult; the apology of a road John had been following hitherto died away altogether, and his course lay through forest with thick undergrowth. As he forced his way through it the grim shade of the trees closed above him till he might be compared to some insect struggling through long grass. Would he ever come out alive? But this question did not trouble him. He pushed on, plunging deeper and deeper into the forest's unknown depths, his mind and soul full of one thing only—the guns. Toward the place where the battle was raging he pressed on with all his speed. He forgot Hornber's warning, where Dalton lay, or where Johnston's army might be. He heard the artillery fire growing steadily louder. There was the Union army and General McPherson. The only thought in his mind now, was how to get the letter there in time.

CHAPTER XVII.

ONE hour had passed, and forty-five minutes of another, and John was still plunging on through the forest, and seemed as far off his journey's end as ever. The ground was very uneven; and though in the uplands, where the trees were of sparser growth and the soil drier, he was able to proceed at a fair pace, in the hollows the surface was a mere sponge of black oozy mud, into which his horse sank to the fetlocks. But on they went, slipping and sliding down-hill, scrambling up, horse and man plastered with evil-smelling slime and choked with thirst, yet full of spirit still, for louder and ever louder came the sound of the guns.

John strained his eyes and ears now to the uttermost for sign of the armies, friend or foe. A courier who is up to his work will have the senses and craft of a backwoodsman, especially the quick ear and keen sight. But John possessed none of these things, and with the heedlessness of inexperience he forced his way onwards much too fast until he came, without

warning, into imminent danger. He would have been a lost man but for his horse. This beast, however, had been on such work before, and no sooner did he scent the approach of his kind than he stopped of his own accord and suspiciously sniffed the air. John looked about and listened. Nothing was to be seen; but he could hear the faint swish, swish of hoofs tramping over swampy ground ahead. He was in one hollow, they in the next, and this gave him a minute to think. They might be friends, but this must not be counted upon; if enemies, he was in a nasty situation. To escape he must mount the rising ground behind, where he would be in full view at short range. If they did not shoot him or his horse, he would have to make a wide detour to escape them, and waste many precious minutes. It was no time, however, for regrets. Delay was better than capture. He turned and spurred his horse, which responded gallantly. Half-way up the rise he heard the 'ping' of rifle bullets, and turned in the saddle to see a dozen men in slouch hats blazing at him as coolly as if he were a partridge. They did not trouble themselves to ride after him, but sat and fired three at a time. Forward went John's body over the saddle bow, home went his spurs again, and the horse bounded on like a mad creature. They reached the crest of the hill in safety, and John saw that most of the men had started in pursuit. One, however, kept still, taking slow and careful aim. Crack—the bullet rang through the air, and hit his horse in the shoulder. The poor beast stumbled, staggered, and fell, but John had time to clear his feet of the stirrups and leap to the ground. His misfortune was greeted by a loud yell, and the rebels dashed up the hill towards him, sure of their prize. But John paid no attention to their shouts. The possibility of his horse being hit had occurred to him before, and he had thought of a way to meet it. To the left of the rise, stretching southwards for some distance, was a low-lying treacherous morass. John had carefully avoided it, thinking, as he passed, what a pleasant place it would be for an army to come upon on a dark night. Now it was his one chance of escape. As the enemy galloped up to the wounded horse, John ran down the slope. He calculated that for a short distance he could outpace the horses over such rough ground, and was relieved to see that they were well behind when he reached the edge of the morass. He leapt in desperately. He might sink to his neck, the enemy might not sink deeper than himself. At the first step the

slime reached to his ankles, the next half-way to his knee. It was cold and sticky, and made anything like swift progress out of the question. But it got no worse; and though the shots of the pursuers as they drew nearer came dangerously close, thanks to the reeds and rank vegetation on the surface of the swamp John escaped harm, and was well upon his way by the time the horsemen reached the edge. It was a critical moment now, as the horses were urged upon the quagmire. To John's relief, only one consented to enter, and, falling, narrowly escaped a miserable death. At this some of the men dismounted and followed John on foot, and he saw that it must now come to a race, to be won by endurance. He measured the distance between himself and his pursuers, and deliberately sat down and took off his boots. This brought the rebels terribly near, and they fired upon him with their revolvers; but it gave him great advantage later, upon which several of them did the same. John was a fairly good runner, and was used to rough ground; moreover, he was in good hard condition, and able to stand a great deal of severe exercise. Yet he felt that from the first it was only a matter of time. The Southerners were more active than he. They knew something of swamps, and picked out the best paths, while he went straight through everything, fair and foul. One mile, two—still the chase went on. Yet the distance was lessening foot by foot, and the rebels showed no sign of giving up. Unless a change were to come within a very few minutes he would be taken prisoner; no, not a prisoner—John was determined there.

So far he had not replied to the attack, saving both breath and strength for escape; but he was fully armed. He drew his revolver and cocked it, loosened his knife in its sheath, looking for a tree or a stump or thick bush where he might come to bay and show his teeth at last. Thus searching, he noticed that he was at the edge of the swamp, and that forest land was beginning again, though not of such thick growth as before.

Suddenly his eye caught something more—something directly in front, not half a mile away—neither a tree, nor bush, but a man, with his back toward him, leaning upon a rifle. The discovery gave new strength to John's weary limbs and muscles; but it still remained to be ascertained whether the man's uniform was blue or grey. He stood in the shade, and at first John could not see how he was clad; then he moved to one side, and seeing the approaching figure, covered it with his rifle. At the

same moment a rift of sunlight struck upon his tunic—the coat was *blue.* John waved his arms, and shouted 'Friend' with all the strength that was in him, and redoubled his speed, while the enemy paused, hesitated, fired a few desultory shots, and turned back.

By the time John had reached the sentry, a picket of a dozen men had come to his support, most of whom, at sight of the sorry figure before them, sat down and laughed till they were weak. Mud, black and shining, encrusted John's face; mud clung in clots to his hair, and covered his tunic and pants so completely that the corporal in charge of the picket suggested that he should be scraped to see if he really were a Union man. John, when he got his breath, laughed too, and begged for the loan of some decent garments before he was conducted to General McPherson. But this was denied him, and dripping and disreputable, he was led at once to the commander of the troops. McPherson received him kindly, and ordering him to refresh himself, provided another horse and gave him a letter for General Sherman.

John rested an hour, and then started on his homeward journey. He found that the Confederates he had met were men belonging to a brigade of cavalry retreating before McPherson's advance. The return ride was accomplished without adventure; but the way was so difficult to find and the country so bad for travelling, that it was after dark when he reached the lines at last, and reported to Lieutenant Snelling. Hornber was with the lieutenant, and both men exclaimed when they saw John, the sergeant gripping his hand until it ached.

'Resurrected, so help me!' he shouted. 'I never expected to see you this side of anywheres again. We guessed you was plugged, for sure. The general has sent twice to inquire; he's powerful interested in you.'

'In my despatches—I will take them to him.'

John found Sherman inside his tent. He read the letter, and smiled.

'McPherson has done it handsomely,' he exclaimed to his officers. 'If he follows up, we shall do.' Then he turned to John.

'You delivered my note?'

'Yes, general.'

'What time from here?'

'Three hours thirty-five minutes.'

'I thought you were going in two?'

'I did not know how bad the country was when I said that.'

'You should not have said it, then. Did you have any accident?'

'My horse was shot.'

'You did not mention that. Shot him yourself by mistake?'

John was too tired to smile.

'I ran upon a patrol of Rebel cavalry, general, and was fired on and chased, and my horse fell.'

'What did you do?'

'Ran it on foot.'

'How far?'

'Two miles, as far as I can reckon.'

'Pshaw! Can you beat horses? You said the Rebs were cavalrymen, remember.'

John, thus questioned, was obliged, against his will, to relate all that had happened. When he mentioned the loss of his boots, Sherman took up a lantern and examined his legs.

'By George, friends,' he said to his staff, 'he tells the truth. There is not a boot to him. Go on—how did you get through?'

John told him. Then the general said—

'I will tell you something. I gave you a really tough bit of work to-day. I thought you knew too much and did too little. I see that I made a mistake, and I will not forget it. Go to your supper; you deserve a better one than you will get.'

When Hornber heard John's adventure, he laughed loud and long.

'What a doggoned fool you must have been to put your head so far into the hornets' nest before you found them out. You are not sharp enough for our work yet, John—not by a hundred miles. Still, you have pleased Uncle Billy. You are on the right track with him, and that is everything.'

John did not see how this could be. He said all he had shown was a capacity for running away. He had certainly got through with the message, but he had been an hour and a half behind his time. He would have argued the matter from this point of view; but Hornber laughed him down.'

'That is all you can see in it, Johnny, honestly? Well, I'm blest! There—go to sleep; I am not going to say another word. Leave it in Uncle Billy's hands. You've no need to do more, or think the least. Turn in, man, and go to sleep.'

For a few days John was put on light duty, as the ride and the run had exhausted him more than he knew. Then back he went to his work again, which, as the army was now in the midst of active operations, was harder than ever.

The force under Sherman amounted to one hundred thousand men of all arms. It was divided into three armies. The army of the Cumberland, under General Thomas; the army of the Tennessee, under General McPherson; and the army of the Ohio, under General Schofield. Sherman himself was with the army of the Cumberland, the most important of the three. Since the first day of May, these armies had been closing in upon the Confederates under General Joseph E. Johnston, who had only fifty thousand effective troops. But though the Federals outnumbered them two to one, they were in a hostile country, and were obliged to bring with them huge convoys of supplies. These had to be strongly guarded, and drew considerable strength from the attacking force. While the Confederates, besides being able to collect supplies as they needed them, and obtain information from the friendly inhabitants of their adversaries' movements, occupied strongly-fortified positions, which could be held against a much larger force than their own. Sherman began his attack by attempting to drive the Confederates from their entrenchments by direct assault; but this resulted in so much loss that he decided to turn their positions from the rear. To do this it was necessary to leave the railroad, by which his supplies reached him, and, storing up twenty days' rations in waggons, strike for the heart of the country, his armies proceeding by different routes, to converge at a point south of the main positions occupied by the enemy. By this means Sherman hoped to induce Johnston to evacuate his strongholds for the purpose of guarding the country below, and thereby give him battle on equal terms. The danger of the plan to the Union army was that, being cut off from its base of supplies, it might run short of food before gaining command of the railroad to the south—now in Confederate hands. The chief difficulties of the march were the bad roads, the forests and swamps through which they must force their way, and, worst of all, ignorance of the enemy's movements, together with the disadvantage that their own designs would probably be ascertained from the first. Even to keep up constant communication between the armies was difficult enough, and had to be done solely by couriers. This formed the basis of John's work.

He soon began to understand his business, and learnt to slip past detachments of the enemy without attracting notice, to exchange revolver shots with a cavalry picket, and ride away under fire without the quiver of an eyelid; to dash past a line of skirmishers, and hear the musket balls patter round him like hail, and, worst of all, to ride steadily about his business while shells screamed overhead and burst far and near, and men were falling on every side, torn in pieces by the bombs. He was often hailed by wounded men wanting his help; crying for water—always for water, others shrieking and blaspheming in their agony. Where occasion allowed, John stopped to give what help he could, but more often he had to harden his heart and hasten on. The succour of the wounded was not for him.

John saw little of the Commander-in-chief, except to receive and take messages, and pass on his sharp, decisive orders. But even by acting as orderly to Sherman, John's practical knowledge of the position of affairs rapidly increased and widened his grasp of military matters. The discussion among the couriers in camp had ceased now, the men being too wearied with their long rides to talk. But John and the sergeant still kept up the custom.

The progress of Sherman's march was slow and uncertain. McPherson's army had forged ahead; Schofield's, on the left flank, was many miles in the rear; while between them, separated from each, was the army of the Cumberland. The difficulties of the situation culminated on the 25th of May by an unexpected meeting with the enemy by the army of the Cumberland not far from the point where the Union forces should have concentrated. At this place the Confederates were massed in considerable strength, a circumstance not anticipated by Sherman, who, however, knowing the importance of carrying the position, ordered an immediate attack. The order was obeyed vigorously, though the men were tired after a long day's march, but it resulted in nothing, for the Confederates were well protected in heavy timber, and repulsed the attack. When darkness came on, the fighting stopped, leaving both armies in some confusion—for the forest growth was thick, and the rain was coming down in torrents. The muddle soon became fearful. Not only was the battle completely quenched, but it is related that both Confederates and Federals severally lost their ways, straggled in large numbers into one another's camps, discovered their mistakes, and slipped out again without a shot being fired.

John, who was conveying a message from General Schofield to Sherman, after a vain attempt to find his commander, groped about until he came to a fallen tree, to which he tied his horse, sitting down beneath it to rest. It was pitch dark, and he hunted for matches to light a pipe. He had just found that his box was lost, when some one tripped over his feet and nearly fell on the top of him. The voice of the man who tripped, and who began cursing loudly, was Sergeant Hornber's. John made himself known, and they sat side by side and grumbled; then talked of the present situation, unconscious that at the other side of the log lay General Sherman. He had lost his way, like many another officer that night, and was trying to snatch a few hours' sleep.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SERGEANT HORNBER, in common with most of the army at this particular time, was in a very bad temper, and he made use of language to relieve his feelings which we will not write down.

'Darn the whole of this blasted business,' he growled, as he rubbed his shins. 'Did you ever see an army in a beastlier fix? But why do I ask you that? A blasted recruit like you ain't seen anything.'

'I want to light my pipe. Got a match?'

'No; got nothing but bruises and an infernally empty stomach. What the darnation did he run us into this cussed hole for? Tell me that, you who know everything.'

John chuckled. He was cross and hungry; but it is always soothing to find a man who is in a worse temper than one's self.

'Who do you mean by "he"?'

'Uncle Billy, of course. Who else?'

The man on the other side of the log began to listen attentively.

'You are wrong there,' John said. 'It is not his fault; it is Joey Hooker's.'

'How do you make that?'

'You know where we are?'

'Not I—nor care.'

'If there were any way of getting a light, I would show you my map.'

'Map?' exclaimed Hornber; 'I thought Uncle Billy had 'em all.'

John laughed.

'He had; but I have scratched out a new one since.'

'The devil you have!' muttered Sherman to himself.

'Last night,' John said, 'I made out from it that we—I mean the army of the Cumberland—were marching upon Dallas, intending to join McPherson, who was ahead, to-night or to-morrow. Joey Hooker, who was in advance, split his corps into three divisions for convenience of marching. The first of these ran into a force of Reb cavalry which were firing a bridge on Pumpkin Vine Creek, the same bridge we crossed this afternoon. The Rebs were driven off, and Hooker, after putting out the blaze, must needs give chase with one division.'

'Oh, that is fighting Joe all over!' Hornber cried, with an oath.

'The cavalry retreated toward Marietta, to the right of Dallas, and one division, Geary's, instead of marching on to Dallas, stuck to the Rebs, and were hoping to chaw them up, when they were met here by infantry who gave them blow for blow, and stopped the fun. I had been sent with a message to Geary, when up came Hooker and Sherman himself, and I heard Uncle Billy order Hooker to go straight ahead—for the Rebs were now giving way—and secure this position, which is at the cross roads they call "New Hope," the Mission House the boys spoke of last night. If Hooker had done that we should be in far better fix than we are. But Joey would not budge. He had an obstinate fit on, and waited for reinforcements. I went to fetch them, and rode all I knew, but before they arrived the enemy had increased his force; the attack failed, and here we are. It is a mess indeed.'

Hornber gave a laugh.

'Johnny, of all the cusses I ever struck, you know the most. If Sherman heard ye, he'd give you a commission to keep your mouth shut. I know he would.'

'As I never open my mouth to any but you, it is rough you should say that,' said John, warmly.

'Well, I'll take it back,' was the rejoinder. 'Now, tell me how we'll get out of this mess.'

'I don't rightly know,' John replied slowly; 'I reckon Sherman will try to take the cross roads yet. But I fear the Rebs are likely to be too strong for us. If that turns out to be so, we must wait until McPherson can get round. He will be

advancing on Dallas now, and have to turn back. That he will not like.'

'But what do we want with this darned "New Hope" anyhow? Hell-hole would be a better name. Dallas was our objective.'

'No; at least, not according to my idea, though Sherman wants the Rebs to think so. It is the railroad.'

'What—for supplies?'

'That is it. We have a few days' rations in the waggons, but we can't hold this country or get through it unless we keep the rails clear behind us to bring all we need. At present the Rebs have them tight from Kingston—where we left them to start for Dallas—to Marietta, twenty-five miles south-east. Unless we force this cross-roads here there is no way for the army to get to the railroad. Now, we must get there or retreat. The only chance is that when McPherson comes back we will outflank Johnston here and push him out. If McPherson is held at Dallas, we will have to seek another way, and that will be hard to find, unless the struggle here compels Johnston to withdraw from Allatoona, twelve miles north, from where he controls the road to Kingston. And even if it does I do not know how we could get to know it.'

'What should be done then, General Burletson?'

Hornber yawned until his jaw nearly cracked. He was very sleepy, yet wanted to hear more. John did not answer.

'Tell me, now,' the sergeant said, waking up, 'what are your ideas if McPherson does not come at oncet. I want to know, lad.'

'If I have any notion, it is worth nothing.'

'Quite likely it ain't; but you must tell it to me.'

'You want sleep more than my ideas.'

'The truth. But I will have the ideas first. Come boy, spit 'em out.'

'Well,' John said at last, 'as I said, if we do not turn Johnston out of Allatoona or take his position here, we would have to retreat or find another way of securing the railroad. I think we ought to prospect around the railroad where the Rebs hold it, and get accurate and complete information of their movements. We know mighty little of them, it seems to me, and generally find they know everything about us.'

'Very pretty sentiments,' grumbled the sergeant, 'only I seem to have heard 'em before. How to do it?'

'Play one of Jeb Stewart's pranks, and detail a picked body of men, well mounted, to take a curve clean round the Reb armies, as he did round ours in Virginia. I don't know, but it seems to me something useful might come of that.'

Hornber scratched his head.

'I see daylight there, John. But our boys would soon be captured fooling about in a strange country.'

'That might happen; but if they were smart and could ride, they would have a rare chance to escape. I should make every man carry provisions for a couple of days, and give orders to all that if attacked they were to scatter and return in couples, or even alone, to report. If only one came back Sherman might get information that would be worth a good deal to him.'

'You go and tell him so,' Hornber rejoined, with a dry chuckle, yawning again. 'You are a genius, Johnny; you should be a general; I said so, first time I saw ye. And now I'm off to sleep to think it over.'

He curled himself up against the log, and was soon snoring with deep regularity. John thought he would follow suit, but not finding his position comfortable, and concluding to try the other side, looked over. He immediately came into collision with some one.

'What do you want now?' said a voice he knew, and which made him jump back with a gasp.

'General, I——'

'Did not know I was there. Perhaps not, but I have been all the time.'

There was an awful pause. John was so shocked that he could not say a word; there was, indeed, nothing he could say.

'Burletson, is it not?'

'Yes, general.'

'I thought so. Are you sleepy?'

'Not now, general.'

'Then answer my questions. How would you get cavalry, even a scouting party, through such an infernal country like this?'

Sherman's tone was severely contemptuous, perhaps designedly so. It put John on his mettle.

'My idea, general,' he answered with deference, but without hesitation, 'would be not to send more than a dozen or twenty at most. We couriers are doing nothing else.'

'I know a courier thinks he can beat creation. But we are not all couriers. Could you do it yourself? Answer straight, now. Would you, if you had a handful of men, undertake to wander around the enemy's positions, and pick up intelligence worth anything? Let me tell you this before you speak. I would not give a cent for the lives of any man who fell into Johnston's hands just now. Would you chance it?'

'I would indeed, general.'

'He would—would he?' Sherman muttered to himself. 'Then'— he paused, to weigh the thought in his mind, before, with characteristic impetuosity, he struck the nail on the head—'then by G—d he shall!'

'Burletson,' he said in a tone from which all sarcasm had gone, 'there is something in this plan. I will give you credit, whether by accident or natural ability, of having stumbled upon a sensible notion, worth putting through. Have you learnt cavalry drill?'

John began to recover his spirits.

'Yes, general.'

'So. Then we will see. Now, let me have the nap of which you and Hornber robbed me.'

By the time the sergeant wakened from his slumber, the Commander-in-Chief had departed, and John said nothing about his presence there. Breakfast was the first thing, and hardly had it been disposed of, when the order came for attack, and the work of the day began. The fighting lasted until the night without much result, the position of the Confederates being as strong as ever; and every one was sulky and disappointed. John alone was cheerful. He wondered what Sherman was planning, and whether it would be his good fortune to take part in the experiment. He forgot the obligation he was under to his mother to avoid all unnecessary risk, and longed for the interest and excitement of such dangerous work. Late in the night a courier came and reported to his comrades that McPherson was hemmed in at Dallas, and could not stir a man to help the army of the Cumberland. John did not sleep much after this.

Next morning, early summons came for John from the Commander-in-Chief. Sherman was at breakfast—dry bread and cold meat, which he ate astride of a wooden keg, and washed down with coffee drunk from a tin mug. As John saluted, the general looked at him very keenly.

'Are you sound in body?' were his first words. 'No wounds?'

'None, general.'

'Then take this note to Colonel Pantling of General Stoneman's division of cavalry. You will find them on the left wing, in front of General Schofield's corps. Return here as soon as possible. Read the note.'

He handed him the letter, and went on with his breakfast, watching John's face out of the corner of his eye. The note was brief and very much to the point, as all Sherman's letters were.

'*To Colonel Pantling, U.S. Cavalry.*

'COLONEL,

'Please supply the bearer, my courier John Burletson, with ten of your smartest troopers. He had better pick them. All must be well mounted and provided with provisions and ammunition for a week. They will be under Burletson's command. I want the men for special duty, and have ordered him to return with them for my personal inspection this afternoon.

'Respectfully yours,

'WILLIAM T. SHERMAN,

'Major-General Commanding.'

(*To be continued.*)

WOMEN'S PUBLIC WORK.

VI.—SHOULD WOMEN STUDY PUBLIC QUESTIONS?

FIFTY years ago, perhaps more lately still, such a question would have excited surprise. The very idea that women could wish to meddle in public matters was looked upon as almost too ridiculous to need contravention, and, as the official of the Local Government Board said, when asked if women could be guardians, there seemed little reason to expect that the question was ever likely to become one of material importance. Miss Louisa Hubbard, who has been one of the most earnest and enterprising initiators and upholders of the work of educated women, and who, though keeping her personality in the background, founded that well-known and valuable work of reference the *Englishwoman's Year-Book*, and helped to set many a now flourishing enterprise upon its way, has described to me her first application to her father to be allowed to use her means and leisure in furthering the cause of educated women more prominently than had hitherto been done. With all his confidence in and affection for his daughter, such a request was felt to be a very painful one; and though writing under initials, the semi-publicity into which she was inevitably drawn by the editorship of *Work and Leisure*, and her advocacy of organisations for women, for a very long time could not be looked upon with equanimity.

To-day, all this is changed. On all sides we have women taking up public work, writing upon it, speaking in public, till it seems idle to ask a question which has long answered itself. The point, however, which it is interesting to dwell upon is, how far this changed order of things affects, or should affect, the ordinary woman living in her own home—she who is never likely to write a line for publication, who is not necessarily going to take up any profession, or at least none that has any connection with public work, who has no time for platform speaking, and is even shy of making her voice heard at an associates' meeting of the Girls' Friendly Society; the girl to whom the word 'trade unions'

only means something connected with discontent and dissent, and to whom political economy is an occult science, to be classed with Greek and other subjects which she could not attack if she would, and would not if she could. It may be urged that these are days of extension lectures and local elections, and newspaper-reading and essay-writing—and possibly all these influences may have led to the study of public questions among girls and women; and yet if one were to ask an average knot of women, in a London drawing-room, in a country town, even in a university college, whether they had ever studied the question of municipal elections, what they knew of the Employers' Liability Act, what is the difference between productive and unproductive expenditure, what are the general provisions of the Factory Acts, or where the Poor Law needs amendment, one questions how many coherent answers would be returned, even from those electors who now have the municipal vote.

On one point, however, the girl who shrinks from the name of 'political economy,' may find herself wiser than she thought, and, like the individual who talked prose, may be something of an economist without knowing it. The care of the poor is a widespread public question, there are comparatively few persons to-day who do not attack it in some form or other, and of late years the care of the poor has become a scientific study. Perhaps there is hardly a clergyman's wife now who does not try to administer such parish charities as come within her jurisdiction, with a view, if an unconscious one, of conforming to economic laws. The old dole system is at a discount, and some attempt is made to look beyond the moment, and to relieve with wider aims and on a sounder basis.

'Really,' it may be said, 'one can hardly mix up the clothing-club and the mothers' meeting with public questions!' And that brings me to the query, What is the difference between a private and a public question? One affects the individual, and is a case for private decision, the other is decided by legislation, I may be told; but after all, the country is but made up of individuals, and is there any imaginable question which does not by-and-by, in some aspect, find its way into the everyday life of some one? You are working quietly in your district, and the husband of one of the members of your boot-club is brought in with a broken leg or an injured back. You are drawn into the discussion on putting the Employers' Liability Act in force; you are able to appreciate what it has done for the worker,

possibly what it has failed to do is borne in upon you, and you may find yourself thinking of the points where it needs amendment and trying to understand the difficulties in the way; or you go week by week to a factory girls' club, and often in busy seasons you miss your brightest members. You see them come in after ten, for a few hurried moments, tired out and overstrained from working 'overtime.' You hear from themselves of the impossibility of refusing the employer's request to stop late, you learn how often the thirty days' overtime allowed by law is exceeded in the course of the year, and when the next amendment of Factory Laws is brought forward you will surely give an awakened interest to the discussion as to whether overtime is to be altogether abolished, and form some opinion as to whether the few extra pence it earns is worth setting against the continued strain upon the worker's health and strength.

It cannot but be interesting to turn to some examples in the past of women who have begun in a quiet way to do work which lay to their hand, and who have been led on step by step, till their voice on the public questions they have mastered is listened to with respect, and their opinion quoted in Parliament when further legislation is to the fore.

I have been told that, just after the close of the Crimean War, a number of officers were dining together, and the question arose, What single individual had exerted the greatest and most telling influence during the late war? It was suggested that each should write down his private opinion. When the papers were read out it was found that every man present had written the name of Florence Nightingale. A great breach in the barriers which surrounded women was made when Miss Nightingale, Agnes Jones, and their noble band of associates stepped suddenly from the quiet study of an eminently womanly pursuit, and carried it into the full light of publicity, to where it indeed became a public question, affecting the very existence of the nation. The right of women to enter wherever there is sorrow or suffering was won for ever, and on all matters of sanitary legislation, on infant-life protection, on registration of midwives, on such a subject as the nationalisation of hospitals, a possibility which begins to be discussed, due weight is given to the opinion of those women who have thoroughly mastered their subject.

We can all go and visit the poor in their own homes and try to persuade them to save, to pay into a clothing-club, and to keep

tidy, and it was only while doing such work that Miss Octavia Hill went on to undertake a scheme which gave great impetus to the drawing up of the Artisans' Dwellings Bill, an Act which has changed the face of the worst parts of London. She began the experiment, with the generous help of Mr. Ruskin, of taking a few houses, let as tenement lodgings, collecting the rent herself from week to week, and gradually improving the miserable surroundings. Her account of her work, with its mixture of loving thought and firm treatment, is helpful reading to all who go among the poor. She established the fact that the poorest classes can be supplied with such a necessity of life as decent lodgings, upon remunerative terms, and she also made clear a truth which had never before been fully recognised, but one which ought to be grasped by every owner of house property, whether in town or country, *i.e.* that there are two processes in the supply. That the clearing away of old abuses, such as bad drainage and foundations, unwholesomely narrow courts and streets, cannot be made a paying process; and that foul dwellings, unfit to be tenanted by human beings, must be improved off the face of the earth, at the cost of the owner. When the Artisans' Dwellings Bill, which admits of the compulsory acquirement of land for the erection of workmen's houses, was coming forward, the Charity Organisation Society, of which Miss Hill was a member, was much interested in what the municipality of Glasgow had been able to effect in this direction. Miss Hill went to Glasgow and put herself into communication with the leaders of the movement there, and by her reports was able to strengthen the measure which insured that private interests should no longer be allowed to bar the way, with the people on one hand, living in the filth and immorality attendant on crowded and highly-rented dwellings, while on the other, large sums of money, left for building model lodgings, lay idle for years, because no land could be had. Her work was one of the most homely detail; but, looking back on it, it has been a great one. The question about which little was known, at the time when she began to interest herself in it, has become a public one, and the subject of the housing of the poor has been lifted into a position of first-rate importance. Miss Louisa Twining, when she first went (as she recounts in her very interesting book on work in workhouses), in fear and trembling, looking upon the workhouse as an inaccessible place, to visit an old Mrs. S——, little thought how she would afterwards enlarge

her work, and what an important influence hers would become. She speaks of the way in which young ladies, and even those not so very young, were, at that time, set aside from all serious discussion, and how little any strong expression of opinion from them would have been tolerated, and adds that those who work to-day have not the least idea what the pioneers of newly created interests had to encounter, if not of opposition, at least of absolute indifference, ignorance, and lack of sympathy, in all but a very few. The first part of her work was done in absolute unconsciousness and solitariness. It was often difficult even to obtain admission within those frowning walls, within which the state of things was well-nigh despairing; but the desperate conditions made her realise how powerless private measures were for coping with them, and how essential it was to carry them before the public. Two or three friends encouraged her, and she heard of one or two other workhouse visitors, Miss Gilpin at Liverpool, Miss Shepherd at Frome. Her letters were received and published as leading articles by the *Guardian* and other papers, and contributed to the appointment of a special commission which opened the eyes of the public to the shameful state of the workhouses and infirmaries.

In the infirmaries the nurses were pauper inmates, usually infirm, and more often drunk than sober, remunerated for their services by glasses of beer or gin; the lying-in ward was immediately over that for the insane; outside one ward a carpet-beating industry, by which the Guardians made £400 a year, was carried on; the noise was continuous and the dust so thick that even on the hottest summer day no window could be opened; a thin mattress across iron bars was the only bed provided for those who lay for years in suffering; the food of the sick was constantly stolen, and the dirt and foulness were unspeakable.

It was Miss Twining who, after years of appeal to the Guardians of the Poor and the Poor Law Board, succeeded in abolishing the entrusting of the sick to the Sairey Gamps and Betsey Prigs, and now no pauper inmate can be employed to perform the duties of a nurse, and no person can be appointed as nurse who has not had practical training. In 1879 Miss Twining founded the Workhouse Infirmary Nursing Association in which the Local Government Board has so much official confidence that they sanction the appointments of the nurses it recommends without further inquiry. The contrast is great

between the neat trim professional nurse and the dirty tipsy old woman of former years. The Board has recently urged the desirability of appointing educated gentlewomen as workhouse matrons. Yet, lest it should be thought that nothing remains to be done, we are assured that there are still workhouses in the provinces and in Ireland where conditions are hardly better than those I have described.

It was the care of village girls in a quiet Hampshire hamlet that led Mrs. Townsend to found the Girls' Friendly Society, with its world-wide influence. It was the sight of the little London slavey which put the thought of the Metropolitan Association for befriending Young Servants into the mind of Mrs. Nassau Senior, whose knowledge of workhouse matters led to her appointment as inspector of workhouse schools. Prison visiting is one of those forms of work which is becoming more widespread, and the appointment of two lady visitors to our female convict prison at Aylesbury has already had important results. The convicts are allowed to finish their sentence in Homes, and on the recommendation of one of these ladies separate and more suitable ones have been chosen for the younger women.

The excellent work done by ladies upon royal commissions is well known. The inquiry into women's work by four ladies in 1892 led mainly to the appointment of female factory inspectors; one of these ladies, Miss Irwin, has founded the Women's Industrial Council in Glasgow, which has led to a similar society being established in London for the collection of facts and statistics connected with women's employment. Lady Frederick Cavendish, Mrs. Sidgwick, and Mrs. Bryant sat as commissioners on Secondary Education, Miss Flora Stevenson on the Scotch Departmental Committee on Habitual Offenders, Miss Cross and Miss Eve on the Committee of Inquiry on Reformatory and Industrial Schools, and Mrs. S. A. Barnett on the Poor Law Schools Commission.

The great Civil Parliament, with elections of and by women, now established all over England, must by degrees form the minds of even the more circumscribed to admit a larger wave of interest, and to recognise cause and effect beyond the home circle, leading them to grasp how largely so-called public questions act upon private life, how deeply they concern the home. The sense of civic duty and responsibility is very dull and dead at present in numbers of the refined and educated classes, but every time a

woman marks her paper and drops it into a ballot-box, like the invisible working of the coral worm, the character of women as citizens is being silently built up, and every year more women are awaking to ask and to investigate. The returns, as far as they can be obtained, of the votes given by women in municipal elections, show that they do not ignore the new opportunities which have come to them. Men who have been connected for thirty years with municipal life, and have a wide experience of its contests, have publicly expressed their opinion that women voters have shown independence and the best sort of public spirit in recording their votes.

It is hardly necessary to say that not all women, not many even, can do such work as that of which instances have been given; but, as Miss Frances Power Cobbe, another of those women whose work has been of public benefit, remarks, there does not seem any reason why all women of the educated classes should not give at least so much time to politics as to enable them to form an intelligent opinion on any subject upon which they may be called upon to give a direct vote. Even those who at present have no votes, will find that to do so will widen their view of life and extend their sympathies. To take the homely instances that lie to our hand: knowing something of the conditions of shop-life, you will have an intelligent feeling for the girl behind the counter; recognising the factory girl as an essential part of our industrial civilisation, we shall think it less necessary to persuade her that domestic service is the only path of safety, and study, instead, how the life she must lead can be made a safe and healthy one. Some study of economics, and understanding of the outline of the larger issues upon which our social life rests, will help us in many of its details; in paying for labour, in relieving distress, and may even lead us to pay our taxes less grudgingly. I think it is R. L. Stevenson who speaks of money paid in taxes as the true charity, impartial and impersonal, cumbering none with obligation, helping all, and the best way to reach the pocket of the deserving poor, and yet to save the expense of secretaries. Realising all that good education (not only confined to book-learning, but embracing domestic and technical teaching), fresh water, well-lighted streets, public libraries, workhouses, and open parks, mean to the poor, we shall be less disposed to grumble at the increase of rates, even if our own pockets are not too well lined.

There was a time when it was held that if women worked at

all, they should do so 'quietly and in their proper place;' but to-day the conception of what is their place is altering. It has been said very truly that no woman can be domestic who is domestic only. Even men who look only for agreeable companions, find these among the educated, rather than the uneducated, and nothing educates and enlarges the whole being so much as studying to help others upon wide grounds. Whatever the nation resolves upon must be administered locally, and in such questions as education, poor relief, prisons, hospitals, emigration, there are departments that scarcely any but women are competent to deal with, and there are hundreds and thousands of women in the country who are competent to help in such work.

It is said that a growing danger of the present day is the tendency to ignore the results of past experience, and to refuse to benefit by the wisdom of those whose work is passing into younger hands. This, if true, points to a serious hindrance in the way of reform, and one that all real study of public questions, 'beginning at the beginning,' ought to do much to obviate. Women of to-day will do well if they work with half the dogged perseverance, the constantly renewed courage, the single mind, and the discretion and judgment of those who were pioneers in so many of the important social movements of our time. One peril those were spared, that of exploiting their work to serve their own ends, to achieve notoriety, or to attract applause. 'Causes' were not fashionable in those days. It was odd, almost unfeminine to espouse them, a course of conduct relatives were rather ashamed of. Every step required the greatest caution, and the woman who had set her heart on furthering her purpose needed to be most careful that she in no way alienated or offended those from whom she wanted help. She had to avoid being conspicuous, to be particular to advance no extreme or ill-digested statements; the importance of establishing a reputation for cool common sense and for real knowledge was fully realised, and obtained the respect and attention that all good work is always sure of in the long run.

It is more and more of that quiet, genuine work that there is room for; but while bearing in mind the supreme importance of care in detail, of painstaking in the small matter close at hand, do not let us be content with the local side alone, of whatever we take up. One need not interfere with the other. I do not suppose that Miss Nightingale, while mapping out the hospital

treatment for an army, would have adjusted a single bandage with less nicety. Wherever we are, then, whether in a country house or parsonage, leading a busy London life or 'buried' in a country town, I suggest that we follow up the history, so to speak, of the work we undertake. Find out its economic side, note what legislation has done for it, and consider what it still may do. Think how it may branch off, and where it affects other places or industries. Nothing is too small to link to great social questions, for there is no closed door this way, and any one bit of steady, fundamental study will infallibly lead on to another. You may be too much engrossed by home calls to give time to any other occupation, but at least you will be able to give intelligent sympathy to those who are fighting abuses. You will be able to help your children to think and to learn. You will have learnt to look below the surface, and the heartless tone too often heard, of those who do not care because they do not know, will become an impossibility. Let us recollect that the opinions of each one of us form a part of that mass of thought by which we are all governed, and that for public opinion even the most insignificant is, in his or her degree, responsible.

EVELYN MARCH-PHILLIPPS.

OFF THE HIGH ROAD:

THE STORY OF A SUMMER.

BY ELEANOR C. PRICE, AUTHOR OF 'IN THE LION'S MOUTH,' 'YOUNG DENYS,' 'MISS LATIMER OF BRYANS,' ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

A KNITTING LESSON.

'And gan to caste, and rollen up and down
Within hire thought his excellent prowesse,
And his estat, and also his renoun,
His wit, his shappe, and eke his gentilnesse.'

MRS. DOWNES was sitting that afternoon in the parlour, teaching her guest to knit. A sunbeam slipped in through the side window, wide open to the garden, and shone on the girl's bright head of soft and wavy hair, bent over the needles, as she sat in a low chair beside her teacher. In the old lilac-bush outside a nightingale was singing sleepily, and a branch of early roses swayed against the window.

The parlour was a fair-sized room, low like the kitchen, and a good deal crammed with furniture, as the way of such rooms is—green armchairs, a sofa, a piano, a table with a bright cloth. On the walls there were photographs, funeral cards, a few doubtful water-colours; on the mantelpiece and side tables, mixed with rubbish, various specimens of curious Staffordshire china. There were flowers in the room, both in pots and vases, and there was a sweet freshness in the atmosphere that suited the two people who were sitting there, each in her own way possessing so much distinction.

Mrs. Downes smiled as she directed the pretty fingers in their new work, expecting all the time that her pupil's patience would give way, that needles and wool would be tossed back into her lap, and 'Missy'—all the household had dropped into old Hezekiah's name—would be off to look for Jessie and some other amusement in the garden or the farmyard. Missy was

an object of great searchings of heart to Mrs. Downes, though she admired and even loved her. She was a clearer-sighted woman than Jessie, who was given to losing her heart so completely as to be incapable of criticism. Mrs. Downes had not lost her first impression that the stranger, the runaway, was the most attractive person she had ever seen; but as the days passed on, it became more and not less of an effort, an anxiety, to keep and entertain this creature from another sphere. Mrs. Downes had long been convinced that her husband—an honest old Radical, and the best tenant in the world, and most loyal man—was right when he used to say that the difference between human beings didn't go deeper than their skins. If he had gone further, he would probably have been candid enough to confess that this amount of difference could be enormous sometimes; and yet he had never received such a thorough object-lesson as 'Miss Field' was now giving his wife.

The girl's unconsciousness was the chief part of it. Her manner to every one in and about the house was easy, polite, and sweet. She asked questions about everything, as if she wished to learn farming, cookery, needlework, gardening, natural history,—all that her hostesses or their people could teach her. She would go everywhere that Jessie went; she would follow Mrs. Downes, like a child her nurse, from kitchen to store-room, from cellar to linen cupboard; she would sit on a corner of the table and eat raisins; she would play with the cat till Pussy's slow dignity was conquered, and her kitten days seemed to have come back again; she had even been seen swinging on the farmyard gate, and had got down slowly and unwillingly when Hezekiah came to drive the cows through.

And yet there were times of weary indifference and discontent, when she would sit idly dreaming with a shadow on her face; when Mrs. Downes and Jessie would suddenly know that she had gone into some world outside their knowledge, which began to seem to them very limited. And sometimes—a little too often—she would call Jessie and order her hither and thither, even speak impatiently to her, which a real princess ought not to have done; but Viola, with her many charms, was not quite perfect. And, to Jessie's distress and vexation, she had a way of becoming silent, even a little haughty in manner, whenever Joseph Arnold came to the house, and that was tolerably often. On these occasions poor Jessie felt torn to pieces, for Joseph was sure to make some remark afterwards,

half-laughing, half-serious, on Miss Field's airs. She would have liked to ask Viola, for her sake, to be rather more civil to Joseph, but she did not dare. There were limits, there was a division that Jessie's loyal heart could not pass; and so she was not quite happy. She said nothing of this to her mother; but Mrs. Downes saw it all plainly enough. She saw also, being the most just of women, that these little faults in their guest were unconscious and unintentional, and especially—which could not be explained to Jessie—that there was something slightly curious, slightly familiar, in Joseph Arnold's manner and talk, which might very naturally set a girl of her kind and in her position on the defensive. For the falseness of the position became more evident every day; and the girl herself was beginning to feel it already, the first excitement being over. Mrs. Downes was far from being without anxiety, as she looked forward to the long summer before them. And yet it was with real tenderness that she looked down on that brown head bent beside her; and neither she nor Jessie would for one moment have confessed that they regretted the movement of charity which had carried them so far, and which Mr. Edwin had thought so wild and so romantic.

Jessie was a busy woman, for Mrs. Downes could walk very little, and seldom went beyond the garden and farmyard. She could not spend much time away from home, and had only been able to take her guest for a few short walks in the evening. She had been unwilling to let her ramble off alone that day; but it was impossible to go with her, and equally impossible to keep her at home, for the May morning called quite irresistibly. Both mother and daughter were growing a little anxious by the time she came in. She had told them about her walk very cheerfully, about old Harry Holt, and how he had laid hands on the young squire and sent him to show her Stepford Hill. She said they had had a nice talk, and Mr. Dampier had walked home with her. She told them nothing of the slip of paper in his pocket-book. Somehow, though she trusted them entirely, that little secret seemed too dangerous to go beyond its present safe quarters. Besides, it would worry them.

Mrs. Downes listened, and thought her own thoughts, and smiled to herself, though rather anxiously, as she wondered what Mr. Edwin would say about the advertisement now.

There was something graver and quieter than usual in Viola's manner that day. As they sat knitting, she talked very soberly

about Stepford and its people. Old Harry Holt interested her a good deal; she wanted to know his history, and Mrs. Downes told it to her, for she had known Harry from his boyhood.

'You are so nice and patriarchal here,' said the girl. 'I am not used to that, for my father bought the place where we live when I was twelve years old. And the people don't know each other very well; they are either rich and distant, or poor and crowded and miserable. I like this better. Is it like this all over the middle of England?'

'Oh no, my dear,' said Mrs. Downes. 'Much of the land in these parts belongs to people who farm their own; or else there are very large farms, with tenants who may come from any distance, and may change ever so often; and many of the small farms on other properties are in the same way. I believe we are old-fashioned here. The Dampiers, you see, have held Stepford for centuries. I believe they came originally from foreign parts; anyhow, they settled down here. And of course I can't be expected to know the history of the estate, which my poor husband could have told you straight off, for he'd often talked it over with the old squire, who was very sociable at times. But I do know this much: that Stepford has always been let in smallish farms, and the tenants have mostly gone on from generation to generation, the Holts being among the oldest of them.'

'And you too, are you not?' said the girl, still bent over her knitting.

'I believe the name of Downes has been here a couple of hundred years,' said the old woman; and she sighed.

'Why do you sigh? People must never sigh without telling the reason.'

'Well, Missy dear,' said Mrs. Downes, smiling—the voice that called her to account was so caressingly gentle—'it just occurs to one sometimes that one's growing old, and the last to bear the name. And, besides, it's sad to think that the palmy days of Stepford are over.'

'I understand about you, only you are not to call yourself old for a great many years yet. But why are the palmy days over? They—the Dampiers—are there still.'

'You have not seen the Colonel,' said Mrs. Downes.

'No. Mr. Dampier told me about the great book he is writing. Why, one of these days he will be celebrated, you know. It is the greatest war history that has ever been written. He

will be Sir Somebody Dampier, or even Lord Dampier, perhaps, or Lord Stepford. It is a splendid service to the Queen and country.'

'And did Mr. Edwin tell you all that about his poor father, Missy?' asked Mrs. Downes, in amused astonishment.

'He told me about the book. The rest came out of my own head. Any person of sense must know all that.'

'And did you tell it to him?'

'No, I have thought of it since. Now, Mrs. Downes, I've dropped a horrid stitch. It is gone beyond recall, and I don't believe I shall ever learn to knit. It is more dreadfully difficult than anything in the world.'

'Come, don't be beaten by a stitch, Missy. There's more difficult things in the world, I do assure you.'

The girl sighed in her turn, a little impatiently. As Mrs. Downes had all this time expected, wool and needles were flung into her lap. The learner did not run away, however, but sat still with her head in her hands while the dropped stitch was picked up again.

'But why should the palmy days be over?' she asked suddenly.

Mrs. Downes did not answer at once; the stitch was too absorbing.

'Because—between you and me, my dear—there is no money, and the estate is going to rack and ruin. Colonel Dampier's father was an extravagant gentleman, and left heavy debts behind him; the Colonel, too, was wild as a young man. Land and farming are not what they were. I remember the farmers in this country very much more prosperous than they are now. And what's bad for the farmers is bad for the landlord too. He has to lower his rents—they were never very high at Stepford—and yet he must keep things going all the same. Colonel Dampier does what he can, and there never was a kinder landlord, though he's not exactly popular. They tell me he's crippled by a big mortgage—money he had to raise to pay his father's debts. I have heard business people say he would do better to sell the place, if he could; but I hope that won't come to pass in my time.'

'I hope not!' said the girl, thoughtfully. 'But if all the tenants were like you, Mrs. Downes, he would be all right, wouldn't he?'

'I have my farm on very favourable terms, Missy. My

master was a prudent man, and Jessie has been my right hand. I have kept my head well above water; but that's more than can be said of most of us, poor old Mr. Holt especially, I'm afraid.'

Viola thought this over in silence for a minute. Then she said—

'There is something rather sad-looking about Mr. Dampier. I suppose he feels what you say, that the palmy days of Stepford are over. I certainly thought him a little melancholy at first, though very nice; but he seemed to like telling me about his father's book. Was Colonel Dampier out in India—in the Mutiny? Yes? That explains a fancy I had, that I had heard the name before. My father and uncle knew him, I'm sure, but they never liked talking about that time.'

'Are they dead, my dear?' said Mrs. Downes—a very thoughtless question; and sudden tears sprang to the girl's eyes as she answered it.

'If they were alive, should I be here?'

Mrs. Downes was heartily ashamed of herself. Having picked up the lost stitch, she laid the knitting aside quite humbly, and began to tell her guest the story of Colonel Dampier's return from India; of his young wife, always so sweet and sad and pale; of the few quiet years which ended so tragically with young Edwin's birth and the death of his mother.

'Yes, he has a little right to look sad,' Missy confessed, having listened with interest to the story. 'But if they are poor and involved and all this, why does he stay here doing nothing?'

Mrs. Downes smiled.

'It's not the first time I've had to stand up for Mr. Edwin,' she said. 'He is the light of our eyes at Stepford, the friend of everybody; and though for his sake it might be better for him to have a profession and live away, neither we nor his father could do without him.'

'Oh, you are a set of selfish old things! He might go away and make his fortune, and bring all the palmy days back again; but you want to keep him here to consult him about roofing sheds and buying pigs and answering advertisements; and when he gives you advice, you don't take it.'

Mrs. Downes laughed outright, though she glanced at the girl a little anxiously. She was aware that Missy knew of her

confidence in Edwin about the advertisement, for Missy had not hidden the fact of having heard his talk with Jessie that first morning. She had then assured her that Mr. Edwin was as much to be trusted as themselves, to which Missy had replied, 'Please don't tell him any more.'

'Mr. Edwin hasn't been complaining to you, I'm sure,' said Mrs. Downes. 'Don't you go and make him discontented.'

Then came one of the moments when she suddenly found herself a little out of tune with her guest; and when, without a word or an outward sign, she was quick enough to feel herself put a little on one side. 'You are a dear old goody, but mind your own affairs, and don't interfere between other people.'

Of course, Viola said nothing of the kind.

'What a long time Jessie is!' were her words. 'We were going down to the river. Where is the knitting? Oh, thank you; I may as well finish that row. But I think it is dreadfully difficult.'

CHAPTER VIII.

SHUTTERS, AND A LIKENESS.

'Si vous croyez que je vais dire
Qui j'ose aimer,
Je ne saurais pour un empire
Vous la nommer.'

EDWIN DAMPIER had by nature a good deal of thought and imagination, and when these have lain asleep for want of something to work upon, they are apt to run rather wild if suddenly awakened and given full employment. And the result is not always happy. For instance, the Stepford woods and meadows, the gardens, the old house and the rooms in it, the servants, everything, took an entirely different aspect in the light of Miss Viola Fairfax's eyes. All looked terribly old and sad and shabby, monotonous and dull. The young master had suddenly become critical. The bogs seemed still to weigh down his feet, and he could not forget them; the May sun shone only on weeds and briars, on the green and cracking stucco of the house; or streaming in at the windows, themselves more than a little dim, betrayed by long lines of dust, the neglect of Firkins and her underling. His father did not see these things. Absorbed

in 'battles long ago,' he did not even notice that Locke's appearance was slovenly, his waiting, solemn as he looked, noisy and careless. The Colonel himself had a natural neatness which never could be disturbed; but for the first time through many sleepy months Edwin considered his own clothes, and was horrified. Really he had not been fit to walk with her. She could have told him that the familiar blue dress and hat had suffered something in their adventures since she ran away from home; but to him they might have come straight from Paris the day before.

'Oh, hang it, I must have some new clothes, I really must—I'm disgraceful!' Edwin owned to himself.

He had no money but what his father gave him; and as the Colonel never remembered this duty, unless he was reminded of it, and as his son hated to remind him, it often happened that the young squire of Stepford was reduced to a few pence in his pocket. He might, of course, have ordered things and sent in the bills to his father; but one of Colonel Dampier's peculiarities, which he did not inherit from his own father, was a passion for ready-money payments. He even preferred paying for a thing beforehand, if possible, and certainly would never order anything unless he had at the moment enough money to pay for it. This brought his household into many an awkward corner, and meant a good deal of self-denial for his son. But Edwin bore it all well enough, as long as he was indifferent. Now he was suddenly face to face with the fact that, without new clothes, he could not appear again before Viola Fairfax.

Wandering restlessly about with her name on his lips, quite unable to mention her to his father, and not knowing what excuse to make for his sudden necessities, he opened a door at the far end of the dark and fusty hall, and plunged into a large room, darker and fustier still. Here he at once tumbled over a chair, and muttered an uncomplimentary remark on Firkins.

There was a glimmer of light from chinks in the shutters, and after a minute Edwin's eyes became accustomed to the gloom. He then made his way past barricades, of piled and shrouded furniture, and, with much clanking of bars and creaking of rusty hinges, dragged back the shutters. Four great windows he treated in this way, and opened them wide to the light and air of heaven. Then he stood in the middle of the room and looked round him. It was a large and beautifully shaped room,

with a vaulted ceiling ornamented with lovely mouldings of fruit and flowers, and painted too with allegorical groups in the tender tints of the last century. The walls were covered thick with pictures, most of them valuable; below these there were old buhl cabinets crammed with splendid old china. The furniture, now thrusting its gilded legs helplessly into the air, was of a period to match the ceiling; but there was other furniture piled there too, which Colonel Dampier had turned out of the library; and there were bookcases, also exiled, full of an immense variety of beautiful old books. For months, even years at a time, neither Colonel Dampier nor his son ever entered this room, the old Stepford drawing-room, which had seen such gay parties in earlier days of splendour. Many a pretty lady smiled there from the walls into darkness, unvisited by any one but Firkins with an occasional, unsympathetic duster. It was a kind of existence that any self-respecting portrait must bitterly resent. Yet the grandmothers and aunts, with the dandies in lace-trimmed coats who watched them, smiled as agreeably as ever on young Edwin as he stood there and looked round. This room, at least, he was thinking, if properly treated——

'Whatever's all this?' said a voice at the door.

It was Mrs. Firkins herself, short, broad, uncompromising, who had been attracted by the noise of the opening shutters.

'Law, Mr. Edwin, what are you doing here? letting in all the sun on that there carpet!'

Edwin disliked Firkins, and avoided her. If the truth must be told, he was even afraid of her; she had a short temper and a sharp tongue, and he did not quite agree with his father that faithfulness might cover as many sins as charity. Brought to bay, however, he answered coolly—

'This room wants a great deal more sun than it ever gets. It smells like a vault. You ought to open the windows every day, Firkins.'

'Oh! it's rather late to be teaching me how to look after a room!' remarked Firkins, scornfully.

'It's bad for the pictures, and the books, and everything. As to the carpet, a little sun will do it good. I'm sure I'm right about it, and if a lady came in she would say the same.'

'Oh, a lady!' said Firkins, staring at him. 'If you're thinking of bringing a lady in, Mr. Edwin, please to give me

due notice, that I may retire. I understand you to mean a permanent lady, sir?'

Edwin burst into an impatient laugh.

'Don't be a fool, Firkins. Of course I mean—that any lady would agree with me.'

'As long as any lady is not my mistress, I shan't feel bound to agree with her. I've taken charge of this house from garret to cellar—not exactly cellar; that and the dining-room is Mr. Locke's province—for many a long year now, and I was never told before that I didn't give satisfaction. Either I manage the rooms, or I don't.'

'I said nothing about satisfaction. I was finding no fault. I only said that this room ought to be opened every day.'

'If you'll kindly let me finish, sir, I was going to say that I excuse you, because of your ignorance. Such a room as this, to be opened every day and constantly kept dusted, would need two additional housemaids. So, if you choose to speak to the Colonel about increasing his staff of servants, instead of piling more work on them he has already, who can hardly do it as it is——'

'I shall certainly speak to my father about no such thing,' said Edwin. 'My orders are to be obeyed, please, Firkins. These windows are to be opened every day.'

Firkins stood by the door, her arms hanging down, and her cross mouth fell a little open as the young master walked out, passing her without waiting for the answer which for once was not ready for him. She stared hard in his face, which was flushed, and his eyes had a stern light in them.

'It's the first time,' said Firkins to herself, 'that I ever saw him look like the old squire when he was angry.'

She watched him as he went down the hall and out through the colonnade into the sunshine, Don jumping up from his mat to follow him. She saw him turn off towards the park through the trees, and she shut her mouth with a tight snap and shook her head.

'No, I don't take no orders from boys,' she said. 'Mr. Locke, is that you?'

Locke advanced cautiously from the dining-room door.

'What's up, Mrs. Firkins?' At the same time he pointed with a warning gesture towards the library opposite.

'Just oblige me by coming here for a moment. Just help me

to shut them tremendous heavy shutters, and then I'll tell you what's up. My belief is, it's a woman.'

'A woman—opened the shutters?' It was Locke's turn to be bewildered.

'Just shut 'em up,' said Mrs. Firkins.

When the great drawing-room was once more buried in its usual darkness, she locked the door and put the key in her pocket.

'Now—whatever do you mean?' said her faithful fellow-servant as they went away together.

Mrs. Firkins's penetration was quite justified by the discovery, made easily enough through Locke and the gardener, that one of the garden men had seen Mr. Edwin a day or two before, walking by the spinney with Mrs. Downes's young lodger, Miss Field. He was just going to his dinner, and had waited a moment behind the garden gate while they passed. Later on, he had met Mr. Edwin coming back alone.

There was not much love lost between Mrs. Downes and the servants at the Hall; they were jealous of her superiority, and she was firmly of opinion that they 'took advantage.' She, however, was far too dignified to interfere with them in any way. But Locke and Firkins were delighted to find any reasonable cause of complaint against Mrs. Downes. Had not they said from the beginning—the Colonel too being disposed to agree with them—that she had no business to let lodgings to strangers so near the very gates of the Hall? And behold, here was the consequence. Mr. Edwin flirting with some good-for-nothing of a girl, who had probably come there on purpose to look after him.

In her first indignation, which was unbounded, Mrs. Firkins talked of going straight to the Colonel; but Locke counselled prudence and moderation. It was no use making a row, he wisely observed, or starting a quarrel between the old master and the young one. Mr. Edwin was young, and his life was very lonely; if a pretty girl crossed his path, it was very natural that he should like to make acquaintance with her.

'Boys and girls, Mrs. Firkins; the old story. We must remember our own youth,' said Locke, benevolently.

She shook her head vehemently.

'If that sort of thing had been in Mr. Edwin's line, he'd have taken to it before now,' she said. 'I've seen all the girls in church staring at him, and he not knowing them from the pews

they stood up in. No, Mr. Locke. If it was some young gentlemen, I'd have nothing to say; they'd tumble into scrapes and out again. Mr. Edwin isn't one of that sort; and if you see him walking with a young woman, it's—it's portentous.'

'Oh—they're more alike than you think,' grinned Locke. 'But any way, how are you going to stop it? He isn't so easy interfered with, either, in spite of his slow ways.'

'Interfere with him! Not I. He gave me a taste of his temper about the drawing-room shutters, though I had the best of him there. If he goes back to that, I shall just tell the Colonel what he said about a lady. But I'm the last person to wish to stir up strife, I'm sure. And so I shall just go and give Mrs. Downes a piece of my mind, and tell her, if she thinks as much of Mr. Edwin as she always pretends to, it would be as well to give her lodger notice.'

'Well, do it quietly,' the prudent Locke advised. 'Stroke her the right way, or it may come to his ears, and if he gets his back up, you'll have done more harm than good, maybe.'

That evening Mrs. Firkins dressed herself in her stiff silk gown and Sunday bonnet, and set forth to pay a formal visit to Mrs. Downes. She was curious, as well as indignant, and did not mean to return home without a sight of the young lady who had performed the feat—she was sure of it—of attracting Mr. Edwin.

Jessie met her at the door and invited her into the parlour, which was empty. Both windows were wide open, and a small breeze was playing round the room, shaking the curtains and the table-cloth. It agitated the flowers in Mrs. Firkins's bonnet, and made her think of rheumatism.

'Is there too much draught?' said Jessie. 'Mother is in the garden, Mrs. Firkins. If you'll excuse me, I'll go and tell her you are here.'

'Well, Miss Downes, I'm rather warm from my walk, so, if you don't *mind* shutting one of the windows, or even both of them—— Thank you. You seem to have a liking for fresh air in this house.'

'Miss Field was here. I think she opened the windows,' said Jessie, calmly.

'Ah!' ejaculated Mrs. Firkins.

'But mother and I certainly are fond of fresh air,' Jessie went on, 'though I suppose you may have too much of a good thing.'

'There's no doubt about that,' said the visitor. 'Is Mrs. Downes alone in the garden, may I ask?'

'No. Miss Field is with her.'

'If you were to fetch your mother, would she come in too?'

'I can't say,' said Jessie.

Gravely contemplating Firkins, who had asked these two questions in a particularly sharp tone, Jessie thought she looked nervous and disagreeable—more disagreeable than usual, if that was possible. The wind had raised wisps of grey hair under her bristling bonnet, her face was very red, her small eyes gleamed maliciously, and her mouth was turned down at the corners. Something wrong with the milk or the eggs, Jessie thought, or some complaint of the farm people. Hezekiah often gave offence. As to the milk and the eggs, she was prepared to defend them to the last extremity.

'Do you specially want to see mother, Mrs. Firkins, or should I do?' she asked, after a moment's consideration.

'Well, Miss Downes, what I had to say to your mother may as well be said to you, as you're both one concern. I shouldn't dislike to see the young person who's lodging here, but my remarks couldn't so well be made in her presence, though you may pass them on if you like, and welcome. But in justice I may say it's more your fault than hers. *You* know how very unfitting such conduct is—I suppose you ain't pretending not to know what I'm talking about?'

'I'm not pretending anything, Mrs. Firkins,' said Jessie, while the colour deepened slowly in her brown cheeks and her dark eyes began to glow. 'I have not the faintest idea what you're talking about.'

'Come now, is it really news to you as she and Mr. Edwin go walking about together? She can't be living in your house and you not know that, surely!'

For a moment Jessie could not and did not answer. She stood staring at Firkins with her hands clasped together. The housekeeper's cross face relaxed into a grin.

'Come, don't pretend to be all that innocent,' she said.

'I'm pretending nothing,' Jessie burst out. She went on in breathless gasps, growing more angry every instant. 'How dare you—you don't know who you are talking about! Can't a lady and gentleman meet and make acquaintance by accident, and walk along a few fields and a lane together—once—but all Stepford must start off gossiping about it? It's a sickening

place! They've nothing to do or to think about, and so they must make up something like this. Unfitting conduct—you don't know what you're saying, Mrs. Firkins, when you use such language. Indeed I'm glad my mother doesn't hear you—and as for—as for Miss Field, I wouldn't let such talk reach her ears for the whole world. It's sheer impertinent gossip, let me tell you.'

'My stars! Then it's hardly worth getting into a rage about,' retorted Firkins. 'And you might remember, Miss Downes, as you're speaking to a lady older than yourself, and a faithful servant of the family. I don't care about your Miss Field—she's nothing to me. But I can't hold my tongue and see the young master getting mixed up in an acquaintance with nobody knows who. Accident or purpose—once or a dozen times—it ain't the right thing.'

Mrs. Firkins's voice quavered and faltered suddenly, partly because of a change in Jessie's face and certain violent signs she was making, partly because of a shadow that fell across the open door. Another moment, and a girl in a soft blue dress and round straw hat was standing in the room.

As her eyes fell on Firkins, that worthy woman rose from her chair. As she bent her head in greeting, Firkins's skirts rustled in a formal curtsey.

'I think your mother wants you, Jessie. We did not know you had a visitor,' said Miss Field, in her easiest, gentlest manner. 'Shall I call Mrs. Downes in?'

'Thank you, ma'am, don't hurry Mrs. Downes,' said the visitor with a meekness quite as extreme as her indignation two minutes before. 'I can wait—in fact, I must be going——'

'No, Mrs. Firkins, don't go yet,' said Jessie, who, though blushing vividly, had regained her good humour with this sudden triumph. 'Mother will be in directly, I'm sure.'

'It—it doesn't matter,' stammered Firkins. Both girls stood smiling; it looked as if the stranger, as well as Jessie, was enjoying her discomfiture. But Miss Field only lingered a moment, while her laughing eyes flashed from the old woman to Jessie.

'I'll tell your mother,' she said, and disappeared.

'Miss Downes, who is she?' demanded Mrs. Firkins, as soon as she was gone; and at the same moment she dropped back into her chair and fanned herself with her handkerchief. 'You might have knocked me down with a feather,' she said. 'I

couldn't take my eyes off her. She's the very living image—why, it might have been herself, only she's dead these many years——'

'Who—who?' cried Jessie.

'Why, I'm telling you. My old mistress—the first and best I ever had—the Countess of Kilkenny. Isn't she a Fitzarthur? Or a Fairfax? She might be my Lady Viola's daughter, though it's the Countess she favours so wonderful.'

'I don't understand what you're talking about, Mrs. Firkins,' said Jessie, only too conscious that she was changing colour in a most tell-tale fashion. 'The young lady's name is Miss Field, as you know. Of course I can't answer for what her relations may be—but sometimes one meets with wonderful likenesses, and no reason for them at all.'

'I suppose that must be it,' said Mrs. Firkins, vaguely. 'It must, for what would a young lady of that family be doing in a poky place like this? And that's all you know about her—name of Field—lodging here for the summer. I can't anyhow remember the name of Field—and yet her eyes and voice and figure, and that pretty stately carriage of her head—— You know nothing more, Miss Downes?'

'Ask my mother,' said Jessie, as calmly as she could. 'She gave her name as Field; and it wasn't our place, because she came to lodge here, to ask for a history of her relations—was it, now? But you see, Mrs. Firkins, you had no call to object——'

'Well—and I don't know about that,' said Firkins, recovering herself. 'Anyhow, it's better to keep them out of each other's way, for Mr. Edwin ain't a marrying man; there's not a penny to spare for him to set up house with. Sometimes it's a wonder to me how we go on as we do.'

She talked in a more friendly spirit for a few minutes, and then suddenly decided not to wait for Mrs. Downes, shook hands with Jessie, and took her departure.

'I'll call again one of these days,' she said, 'and you can tell me if you've found out anything. I could have sworn it was my lady herself walking in at that door.'

Jessie meditated much over this. When her mother came in, having strayed on down the garden so that Missy failed at first to find her, she spoke of Mrs. Firkins's call as of an ordinary and quite uninteresting event. But when the two girls were alone together, Missy asked who that ugly old woman was.

'Only Mrs. Firkins, the housekeeper at the Hall,' said Jessie,

and then added, 'You—you heard what she was saying, as you came in at the door.'

'I heard something, with those rabbit ears of mine,' said the other girl, smiling. 'She is right to be particular about the young master, and the acquaintance he picks up.'

'She was very rude. I always dislike her, and to-day I was really angry with her,' said Jessie. 'But listen—I must tell you what she said after she saw you.'

Missy did listen, and very gravely. 'Extraordinary,' she said, 'down in this part of the world, that I should meet one of my grandmother's under-housemaids! Yes, I am the image of Lady Kilkenny, I believe. This good woman had certainly never seen *me* before. It is rather tiresome, isn't it, Jessie?'

'I think we can defend you from Mrs. Firkins,' said Jessie in a low voice.

'I know, dear. She will have to step over your dead body to reach me. In the mean while, I hope she won't chatter too much about likenesses,' said Lady Kilkenny's granddaughter, with a little yawn.

CHAPTER IX.

FACT AND FANCY.

'Thou didst delight my ear:
Ah! little praise; thy voice
Makes other hearts rejoice,
Makes all ears glad that hear;
And short my joy: but yet,
O song, do not forget.'

FOUR men were met together in a lawyer's office in the Strand. Below the windows, the roar of the street went on perpetually, bewildering untrained ears, so that one old man, who sat in a large armchair by the fireplace, had to ask the owner of the room to shut the windows. It was better to be stifled than to be deafened, on that summer day, and he was bent on hearing what his companions said. He was a weak-looking old man; but his eyes shone with a certain determination, and his thin hands were clenched on his knees.

Near him on the hearthrug stood a much younger man, slight, pale, and reddish, fashionably dressed, with a nervous face and a fidgety manner. A third, who had flung himself back in another large chair, looked like an old soldier, with

something sordid and wooden in the hard lines of his face. He too seemed impatient, and lay hitting his boot sharply with his cane. The fourth, a smart little man sitting by a desk, and glancing from one to another with a rather mocking smile, was the solicitor to whom the room belonged.

'Speaking mildly, you know,' said the young man on the hearthrug in drawling tones, 'it seems to me that nothing ever was worse managed. People don't disappear and leave no trace—none. There must be hopeless stupidity somewhere.'

'There is,' growled the officer, 'but not so far off as you think.'

'That's meant for me, Mr. Keane—do you understand that's meant for me?' stammered out the old man in the other arm-chair, with a laugh. 'That's how they reproach me, because I refuse to have Miss Fairfax's name made public, bandied about in every vulgar little newspaper, talked over in the clubs——'

'It's that already,' muttered the younger man.

'We quite see your point of view, Sir Henry,' said Mr. Keane. 'But the young lady has brought it all on herself, remember. She has run away—so much is clear—and has lain *perdue* successfully till now. She cannot have expected that no attempt would be made to find her. And it is difficult to find a person without letting the world know that she is lost. That is General Marston's argument. It is a case in which there is right on both sides.'

'Advertise in every paper—inform the police all over England—offer a sufficient reward, and we shall have an army of discoverers working for us,' said the General. 'Whereas, to suit my brother's delicate feelings, we even withdrew a faint hint in the *Times* that Miss Viola Fairfax was missing. And we can't alarm him—neither his son nor I. We have tried to point out a hundred things that might have happened to the girl. He only says that she had a good sum of money with her, and was quite capable of taking care of herself.'

'From what I have seen of Miss Fairfax, I am inclined to agree with Sir Henry,' smiled Mr. Keane. 'A young lady of great spirit, great personal dignity. My impression is that she has retired to some quiet nook out of the way of her guardians, and will reappear as soon as it suits her convenience—that is, as soon as she has a right to act independently. I am afraid it is possible, General Marston—possible, mind; I don't speak with authority—that persuasion on a certain point may have been a

little too strong. That makes it rather slippery walking for her guardians, just at the present moment. She might have something to say, to justify her disappearance, though I feel sure that her consideration for Sir Henry Marston would be as great as his for her.'

Mr. Marston made faces on the hearthrug, and bit savagely at the ends of his long thin moustache.

'Ah! that's it, that's it. She took a dislike to Augustus, tiresome girl,' said Sir Henry, nodding, and rubbing his hands together. 'You see, Frank—you see, Gussy—Mr. Keane agrees with me. We must keep quiet, or we shall make matters worse. We must give her time—time.'

'Exactly what she wants. Time—which will end on the first of September. Then Gussy's chance drops as dead as a partridge.'

'You're awfully candid, Uncle Frank,' said the young man, with a short laugh.

'I am only facing the situation. If your father is right—if she has really taken this prejudice, of course there is nothing to be hoped for. I am not so sure, though, that he is right. Women are uncertain, and Miss Viola changes her mind as often as most of them, I think. Anyhow, it seems madness to let the whole matter drift; besides that, our plain duty as her guardians is to find her. She must be found. She may have got into the hands of any adventurers—and there is all the summer yet—in short, we must find her by some means, public or private, fair or foul.'

'Of course we could cover England with detectives,' said Mr. Keane, after looking round in silence. 'But the expense——'

'Expense is nothing,' said General Marston. 'There is enough to pay the bill.'

'As much expense as you like,' said Sir Henry, 'but no more advertising. That is what I hate.'

'You consider it improbable that Miss Fairfax has gone abroad?' asked Mr. Keane, beginning to scribble notes on a bit of paper.

'Well, the inquiries that were made at the time had no result. Of course she may have slipped across since—during all these weeks of doing nothing on our part,' said the General.

'No, I don't think she has gone abroad,' said Sir Henry.

'Very well. Then what I have to do is to set on foot a system of private inquiry throughout every county in England.'

'That is more like it,' said the General.

'Better late than never,' muttered Mr. Augustus Marston.

Thus, with much more consultation and plotting, while the roar of the Strand swelled and died away under the high office windows, these cynical and heartless spiders began to weave their web again to catch the young fly who had so boldly escaped from them.

* * * * * *

It was on that same bright summer day that Edwin Dampier, after much hesitation, screwed up his courage to ask his father for some money. Colonel Dampier wrote him a cheque without any difficulty; but that evening, walking up and down the terrace arm-in-arm with his son after dinner, and having finished a long dissertation on the Battle of Hastings, which would have startled Mr. Freeman and other historians, he began to talk freely about the state of his affairs. The questions that he asked Edwin could not be very satisfactorily answered. The tenants were more and more irregular; little rent could be extracted without an amount of pressure that both father and son hated to employ; the state of the land was going from bad to worse; a dry spring made the prospects of grass and roots terribly poor, except in certain shady and damp places. All this time the interest on the mortgage had to be paid regularly, besides other claims on the estate that had come down from former generations. Then there were all the wages, and the helping of those, such as old Harry Holt, who could not help themselves.

'It is absurd for us to attempt going on like this,' said Edwin, impatiently. 'Don't you think so, father?'

'What is your remedy?' asked Colonel Dampier.

There was silence. The rising moon threw shadows over the grass, and the song of the nightingales was almost deafening. To be walking there with *her*—with *her*—on such a night as this! Was the old garden, in itself so romantic, with those tall firs standing black against the fading western sky—was it made to hear no talk but of crops and cattle, and rents and bad debts and liabilities? Edwin, with his new feelings, with the impatience that burned in him, with all his strength absorbed in pulling against the cords that were dragging him to the farm, could almost have cried out in rebellion against the sham peace and beauty of it all. At first he did not know how to answer his father, for indeed he saw no way out, no remedy.

'The man who complains should suggest a remedy,' repeated the Colonel.

'I don't complain,' said Edwin. 'But I suppose we might come to smash some day. Anyhow, you might find it impossible to keep this house going—the servants and so on.'

'You remember what Napoleon said of the word "impossible"—that it is only to be found in the dictionary of fools. It is my duty to keep this house going, and I shall certainly do my duty. How could I turn poor Firkins adrift, for instance? I used not to think so, but now I see it; a house like this means a duty, Ned. One of these days I shall have the first volume of my "History of Battles" ready for the publisher. That will bring some grist to the mill, I hope.'

'Of course it will,' said Edwin, trying to speak cheerfully. 'But look at me—I'm horribly idle here. Suppose I were to go out into the world and earn my living, father.'

'No man is idle who is keeping his own post and doing his duty. You are rather blind on that point. If you were away, I should have to give up my book, or else to employ an agent, a steward, a bailiff. This I can't afford, so it would be the other. Your post is here, Ned.'

The young fellow shrugged his shoulders.

'By your own showing, sir, it is a bad business altogether. And other people think so. That man Arnold—I met him not long ago, on his way back from dunning poor old Holt, who owes him a lot of money, I'm afraid. He began making his remarks on the estate, and went so far as to ask me if you had ever thought of selling it.'

In an ordinary frame of mind, Edwin would never have told his father this; but he was a little desperate now, and felt as if something, no matter what, must happen; as if the present state of things must somehow make a step nearer its end.

At first Colonel Dampier said nothing. Was he angry? Edwin thought it probable, remembering his own feelings, but could not be sure. His father paced along steadily, and the silence was profound. Only the nightingale sang louder as the moon rose higher, and a bush of honeysuckle wafted strong scent through the air.

'Arnold is a clever man,' said the Colonel at last. 'But it has not occurred to him that every one in this life has his own battle to fight, be it offensive or defensive. That is to say, he realises his own part, but not ours. He would capture Stepford

if he could. We have to defend it, and he does not see that we certainly shall do so.'

'I don't think that was his idea,' cried Edwin, surprised. 'He talked about all that a capitalist could do with the land, but he can't have meant himself, I think. To begin with, he's not rich enough. Besides—I tried to snub him as it was—I might have said something stronger if he had even hinted at your selling to *him*.'

Colonel Dampier laughed rather sadly.

'So you are ready to hold the fort, even without provisions!' he said.

'Against Arnold, certainly.'

'I suspect you are wrong, and that his question was meant as a feeler. He is making money fast, and his ambition is probably to buy a place and found a family. He would have capital enough to make Stepford a very different place from what it is now. Arnold has good taste in all ways. He is engaged to one of the best women in the country, and he prefers buying an old house to building a new one. I think his ambition is very honourable.'

'He is a money-grubbing beast,' said Edwin.

'Don't be foolish. The worthier the attacking force, the more credit to the defenders.'

'I thought, sir, that your land and your affairs were no business of Mr. Arnold's, and that the remark he made to me was rank impertinence. But of course, if you *wish* to sell the place to him, that is another thing,' said Edwin, very angry.

'I see how the word "impossible" comes to be in your dictionary,' replied the Colonel, with great coolness. 'Never mind, Ned. My affairs have been in a state of siege for thirty years. Lately, the enemy has no doubt made closer approaches; but we shall beat him off yet, even if we have to retire from the most distant trenches.'

'I don't know what you mean, sir.'

'You know those two cottages and the seven-acre field on the Tarringford road. I never intended to part with a square inch of the ground my father left me; but after all, that is an outlying corner which was bought by my father for old Downes's sake, because at that time there was a fever of speculation in small houses, and Downes was afraid his farm would be spoilt if a row were to be built there. The field is not good land, but it

might pay an enterprising man—and Mrs. Downes would not complain, I suppose, if the man was her son-in-law.'

'I don't understand. Had you thought of this?'

'I had thought of it, yes, though not definitely. I did not know that Arnold was suffering from land-hunger. This might give him a morsel to crunch, till the rest comes into the market, and certainly the money would be acceptable to me just now. We will think about it further.'

'The rest will never come into the market.'

'Not in my time—nor in yours, perhaps—unless you lose all interest in it by going out into the world to earn your living, as you suggested. I see nothing for you but to marry an heiress, my dear Ned.'

Colonel Dampier smiled at his boy in the moonlight, and leaned more heavily on his arm. The young man's face looked unnaturally pale, perhaps from the moonlight, and he frowned as he answered—

'Heiresses grow on every bush about here, don't they? But before selling Stepford, father—especially to Arnold—I'll die of starvation on the doorstep,' he ended with a short laugh.

'The rules of war won't demand that, if you can march out honourably with colours flying,' Colonel Dampier said quite gently. 'Now I will go in, if you please.'

The boy was a little tiresome that evening, he thought. He had given him money for his new clothes; what more did he want? It was no use getting into exaggerated low spirits about the estate affairs, which seemed likely to be worse before they were better. He went back gladly to the consideration of the Battle of Hastings.

Edwin did not follow his father into the house, but remained outside, tramping up and down in a state of restless misery. The night was too serene, too beautiful; the nightingales were maddening. The garden was only the outer court of the fortress, the prison, whose walls, out of the glare of day, looked so new and splendid, set square upon the lawns, throwing clear shadows of every uneven roof and chimney. It was all dreamy, phantasmal; and Edwin wondered, not for the first time, whether that walk with her, her voice, her eyes, the touch of her hand, had been a dream. All had seemed more vague, and yet more vivid, in some strange contradictory way, as the days lengthened, the summer deepened, and no happy accident had allowed him to meet her again. Some spirit of resistance, springing from a

yet deeper foundation than his lack of new clothes, had kept him away from the farm. He was an honest fellow, quite capable of looking things in the face; he knew what it would mean, if he gave way to this overwhelming attraction, and he saw himself hedged in by prison walls and impossibilities.

But to-night it was too strong for him: the absolute exile, complete self-denial, seemed after all unnecessary. Or rather, he could not reason at all: a power outside himself carried him out of the garden and along the hollow road, bare-headed, as he had been walking on the terrace. It did not matter; he was not likely to meet any one, and the shadows were deep down there. He left the nightingales in the garden, but as he walked along by the spinney, an owl's long melancholy hoot echoed through the evening, from the old ivied oak that hung over the gate into the Slang.

He walked softly up through the orchard, keeping to the track that the farm people had made through the long wet grass, winding in and out under the low apple-trees. The garden-gate clicked as he opened it, and he was startled—having till now walked in the shadows—at the sight of his own shadow lying before him on the moonlit path. And there was no soft grass to walk on here; the path was edged by lines of clipped box and flower-borders, on which for Mrs. Downes's sake one could not trespass.

He walked a few yards cautiously, then stopped under an old pear-tree, and standing here could see the whole south front of the house, as well as a corner of courtyard to the west. The kitchen window was hidden by the porch, but he could see both the parlour windows. Both were open, that breathless night, and the light from within shone softly out into the garden. Here again was a nightingale, singing its heart out in the lilac-bush close by. Inside the windows shadows were moving, and there was a murmur of voices. Then presently the nightingale paused, and after a few moments of silence, during which the watcher in the garden held his breath, some notes of the old piano stole out upon the air. Surely it had never sounded so melodious, and that was not the touch of Jessie's fingers!

The voice that sang, naturally sweet, had had a very different training from any that Tarringford could give. The songs were modern, and strange to all the hearers; but one at least, with no pretension to be musical, listened with ravished ears to what seemed to him the most lovely, the most pathetic music he had

ever heard in his life. He crept on from his pear-tree, and boldly ventured close up to the window.

Waiting there, he could see the lady of his dreams as she sat at the piano, Jessie close by with eyes and ears intent, Mrs. Downes in an armchair, hands and knitting idle in her lap. Viola had no music before her, but went on singing as it pleased her; now and then she turned half round to tell them the name of a song. Edwin wondered at the beautiful shape of her head the shining, curling masses of her hair.

At last, when perhaps half an hour had gone, Mrs. Downes roused herself from silent enjoyment and said it was time to shut up and go to bed. She rose and came to the window near which Edwin was standing; he, rooted to the spot, had only just time and presence of mind to step back into the shadow of the lilac-bush.

Mrs. Downes heard the hurried movement, and bent forward curiously from the window. At the same moment Viola said—

'Now, Jessie, a little walk in the moonlight.'

'No, my dears, if you please,' said Mrs. Downes, turning round quickly. 'It's late, Missy, and if you'll excuse me, I should prefer your going straight upstairs.'

Viola did not argue the matter, but wished them good night and left the room. Jessie came up to her mother, who was still standing by the window.

'What is it, mother?' she said.

'It's somebody in the garden,' said Mrs. Downes. 'I certainly heard steps, and I think I saw something moving by the bush there. Perhaps you had better call Hezekiah, or let the dog loose.'

'Oh no; I dare say it's nothing. I'll go round and look, if you'll wait here,' said Jessie. 'One fancies things in the moonlight.'

'No, no! There it is again. Oh!'

Mrs. Downes's faint scream was justified by the sudden appearance of a young man, flushed and bare-headed, who stepped across the little square of grass and stood by the low window-sill.

'A friend, Mrs. Downes. Don't be frightened,' he said gently.

'Mr. Edwin! You! At this time of night! Has anything happened, sir?'

'Only that I've taken an evening walk. And some good or ill luck brought me where I shouldn't be.'

'It brought you where you've been a stranger lately; so it's good in my eyes. Why didn't you come in? But anyhow you've heard some pretty music, Mr. Edwin.'

'I had no business here,' he said. 'I didn't mean to show myself, but your senses are so quick, I couldn't hide in time. And then—I couldn't let you think it was a burglar.'

'I was just going to send for Hezekiah and the dog.'

'How cruel of you! Good night. I'm sorry I frightened you. Good night, Miss Jessie.'

He ran off without another word. Mrs. Downes and Jessie stood looking at each other.

'Don't say anything to her,' said the elder woman, sternly.

But a window above was open to the summer night, and somebody, standing there and smiling to herself as the little conversation rose plainly to her ears, sent a silent but friendly 'good night' after the hurrying figure as it crossed the moonlit garden.

(*To be continued.*)

ACHILL AND THE CLADDAGH.

PART I.

No one can form any idea, who has not visited the spot, of the wonderfully beautiful Seal Caves on the wild Achill coast, at the foot of Slievemore Mountain. I am going to describe a day spent there, and among the Cathedral Rocks on the other side of the island. It is a little difficult getting to Dugort, in Achill, in spite of Mr. Balfour's railway from Westport to Achill Sound, as there still remains eight (Irish) miles to be got over, and, wet or dry, it has to be undertaken in an Irish car. (N.B.—It was very dry and dusty when we went, and very wet and windy when we left; so that we were covered with dust the one drive, and wet through the other!)

However, we arrived at the Slievemore Hotel, Dugort, one summer evening early in June, to see the broad Atlantic sleeping calmly before us and beautiful Slievemore, with a crown of mist round his summit, close to the little village at our side. (There is a magnificent view from the top, and even halfway up this mountain, 2204 feet high.)

Welcomed by Mr. Sherridan, the enterprising and accomplished landlord, who is enlarging the hotel, and hopes to render the place in time more accessible, we strolled with him down to the shore to arrange an expedition in the morning to the Seal Caves (weather permitting), and in the evening to the Cathedral Rocks, as it would then be low tide. We found him a most intelligent man and famous guide, and greatly interested in archæology, he himself writing a book on these subjects. It is very necessary to say 'weather permitting,' as it is a wild coast, and many, many days, even in summer, it would be quite impossible to venture round the point—indeed, no boat could be launched.

The moon came out as we strolled back from a little bay about a mile from the hotel, where we picked up cowrie shells and small fans of the loveliest red, yellow, and orange shade. It looked well for the morning, watching some fishermen getting

ready to set their lobster-pots, and listening to the one clear, green wave which slowly broke on the sand minute by minute as we reluctantly passed along to the village. We felt a wish to remain out all night, and go to sleep on that yellow sand to the sweet thud, thud, of that everlasting wave!

Morning broke, calm, though a little cloudy, and having chartered the lifeboat from the coastguard station, we set off at eleven o'clock, well pleased that the elements were so propitious.

Coasting along the island, we encountered two large Galway fishing-smacks anchored there for a time in pursuit of lobsters. The blue smoke rising from the little fire underneath the canvas raised on poles, the bronzed faces of the men with their red caps leaning over the side, added not a little to the beauty of the scene. Then we passed the salmon stakes, where we witnessed the net thrown down inside the circle of round poles to bring up the silvery treasures; and finally, turning the point where the smallest possible jumble showed us a little what *can* take place, we made for some high rocky peaks, and rowing sharply round the corner, are shown the first Seal Cave. Wild birds in every direction. Forty cormorants on a headland close by refuse to move. Fit home for the shy seal to resort to every autumn! There are five of these large caves, for the most part differing from each other in various ways. But clear, green-blue water in all. The loveliest of them, with its rocky sides of different colours—orange, pink, dark purple, and green—and the roof completely covered, and hanging down with all sorts of beautiful ferns, made such a picture as is rarely seen. Would that some master-hand could bring it away on canvas and show it to the world! Another of these caves is a long, narrow fissure, and no one has ever come to the end of it.

Mr. Sherridan, when a young man, took his boat, and giving two men a very long rope, tied it round his body, and putting a little lamp in the front of his cap, swam bravely in. When he came to the end of the rope he seemed still as far off as ever, and the men fearing to follow with the boat, and afraid that something might happen to him if they let him go further in, pulled him back, and no one else has ever attempted it since. They fired a gun into its depths, the sound of which seemed as if it came out at the other end of the island.

Be this as it may, the seals love this cave particularly, and Mr. Sherridan has secured various young seals at this spot from

time to time, and mounting them on red cloth, they are very quickly bought by the tourists. The tide was rising as we turned to go back, and a huge fountain of spray burst every few minutes from a hole in one of the cliffs, very much like 'the bellows' at Kynance Cove on a larger scale.

Once more we turned the point, Sherridan confessing he was always glad to leave it behind, as more than once the wind had risen suddenly, and it was as much as they could do to round it. There are several other caves nearer the village, on the other side, all very beautiful, in one of which we pulled up for luncheon, as, instead of water, it boasted the whitest of silvery sand. Opening the basket, we did justice to the fishing of the previous night in the shape of a splendid lobster. All too soon we had to return and prepare for our other expedition to Keel Bay and the famous Cathedral Rocks, 'as magnificent a combination of caverns and fretted pillars as is to be found on the coast of the British Isles. Colour, shape, and size all contribute to the general effect; indeed, we know nothing of the kind at once so easy of access and so impressive.' All that is needed for a thorough enjoyment of these huge cliffs is low water and good strong boots, as it is rough walking, and sometimes rather slippery; but when gazing up at this grand natural cathedral every little inconvenience is forgotten, and nothing seems so suitable to the prospect as Sir Walter Scott's well-known lines on Staffa—

> 'Where as to shame the temples decked
> By skill of earthly architect,
> Nature herself, it seemed, would raise
> A minster to her Maker's praise.'

Returning to Keel Bay, we encountered the flowing tide and soft sea-breeze, which sent in the rollers foaming at our feet as we bowled along the firm yellow sand in our Irish car for two miles and a half. We left the shore at Keel village to admire 'the most beautiful view on the island, the Menawn Cliffs, whose precipices and ravines are set off by the lovely foreground of the bay.' It is from this point that John Brett has immortalized the view, and probably sent many a lover of nature away from his picture to study the original at his leisure. There are few finer cliff ranges than that of Menawn, between Dooga Head (800 feet high, almost sheer) and Keel Strand.

The mist now began to swirl round, and envelope this fine range; so after driving on a little further to have a peep of the

primitive little village of Dooagh, where they still grind their own corn, and where every little barefooted urchin rushes forward with specimens of Achill amethysts, 'mauve coloured quartz crystals, and often of real beauty, though very different from the precious Oriental amethyst which is a purple variety of sapphire.'

It was now time to return, and I cannot, I think, close this paper upon Achill more suitably than by quoting two verses of a poem which Mr. Sherridan recited to us as we stood watching the waves for a few minutes in Keel Bay—

'The Achill Isles, the Achill Isles,
What changing thought the way beguiles!
The granite crown of dark Slievemore,
The curlew's scream upon the shore,
The splashy bog, the fresh-cut peat,
The mountain sheep responsive bleat,
The golden eagle poised on high,
The blue of ocean and of sky.

'The Achill Isles, the Achill Isles,
The dizzy path to Keene defiles,
By cliffs that mock the Atlantic tide,
By chasms opening deep and wide.
Still, as we climb 'tis sweet to know
A vale of beauty lies below,
Where violets spring, and fuchsias lave
Their sea-kissed blossoms in the wave.

'The Achill Isles, the Achill Isles,
'Neath Menawn's rocky solemn piles,
A temple fashioned by the sea
Echoes the wild wave's litany!'

PART II.

THE fine old town of Galway, 'the citie of the tribes,' surrounded on all sides by beautiful scenery, not only attracts visitors for its own sake, but by being a 'centre' straight from Dublin, whereby travellers can pass south into Clare, with its grand Moher Cliffs; visit the Arran Isles, so rich in archæological remains; spend a day at Kilkee, etc.; or, travelling north through Connemara, visit Cong Abbey, Lenane, Achill Island, and other places of interest.

Anterior to the invasion of the English, this city was under the protection of the O'Flaherties, from whom it was taken in

the thirteenth century by De Burgo, who, surrounding it with walls, fortified it strongly, and introduced an English colony, the thirteen principal families of which were: Athy, Blake, Bodkin, Brown, Deane, D'Arcy, Joyes, Kirwan, Martin, Morris, Lynch, Skerret, French—afterwards known as 'the tribes.' 'It rapidly became an important commercial centre, for a long time doing an extensive trade with Spain, the effects of which may still be seen in the older buildings, many of them having a gate in the centre leading to an interior courtyard.'

Galway would not be Galway without that portion of it near the harbour, where several hundred cottages, closely packed together, have from time immemorial been inhabited by the Claddagh tribe—a race of fishermen who elected their own king, and he settled all their disputes and differences, and administered their laws.

'The king, when elected, presented to his queen a gold ring of ancient Irish design, signifying "love and friendship reign," and it became the acknowledged wedding-ring of all the tribe, and was adopted by the surrounding peasantry.' Thus writes Mr. Dillon of William Street, Galway, the only maker of these rings; and he adds, 'it is now about forty years since I made a Claddagh ring for the last King of Claddagh (now an old man of 100), but although the old custom of electing a king has been discontinued, the people still retain the ring, and will use no other on the occasion of a marriage.' This ring is considered an heirloom, passing on from mother to daughter. Should a girl have but £10, and possess no ring, £1 is always laid out in purchasing one. A silver one costs 10*s.*, but is seldom used.

The Claddagh means 'Cladach' (sea-shore, strand), and the fishermen may be taken as types of the original Celtic inhabitants. We entered 'the king's' cottage, and spoke to his son, and granddaughter (who was not at all above receiving a small *douceur*), but he himself, since becoming so aged (100 years), retires in the winter to the workhouse, returning to his regal (?) abode in the summer. They were daily expecting him, as it was then June.

Unfortunately, the steam-trawling is taking away much of the Galway fishing, so that many of the young fellows leave the settlement to push their fortunes elsewhere.

We witnessed the departure of one of these young men at a small station near Galway, when a crowd of poor Irish people flocked in (about thirty), in the centre of which group, making a

tremendous wailing and crying, was a tall, handsome young woman, evidently his sweetheart, who seemed to think she had a right to make more lamentation and noise than all others: though the poor old mother, with her wistful, sorrowing face, claimed far more of our sympathy. The guard told us he was bound for America, and they always 'celebrate' the departure by sitting up most of the previous night. They were an orderly, quiet crew, with the exception of the wailing damsel. So different from the passionate, but repressed grief of a Scotch lassie!

Coming back to the town from the Claddagh, we next inspected the 'Lynch stone,' let into the outside of a graveyard wall, on the spot where, with Spartan justice, James Lynch Fitzstephen condemned and executed his own son Walter, who in a fit of jealousy had stabbed and killed a young Spaniard, whom he fancied was supplanting him in the affections of his lady-love. As great provocation had been given, and he was a universal favourite, the whole town rose *en masse*, and refused to condemn him. So the unhappy father dragged his poor son upstairs, where, after embracing him tenderly, carried out the sentence himself from the prison window. So intense was his grief, however, that he lived only a few months afterwards to mourn the untimely fate of his son.

The salmon-fishing of Galway, so often spoken about, is actually *in* the town, and only extends over a few hundred yards. The numbers of salmon and sea-trout seen is prodigious, and in this bit of water fishermen are privileged to fish at the rate of £1 a rod per diem.

The fishing belongs to a club, and it is only when a rod is unappropriated that terms can be arranged with the secretary. We ourselves saw three good-sized salmon leap; and a poor otter, who had also, most probably, been enjoying, not only the sight, but the taste of his favourite fish, lay stretched on the grass, having been shot the previous evening.

Time forbade our extending our tour, but we quite hope, at some future time, to revisit Galway for the purpose of sailing to the Arran Isles, wandering through grand old Cong Abbey, and feasting our eyes on the far-famed cliffs of Moher.

JANET SINCLAIR BERGER.

IN THE SILENCE.

In the silence of the gloaming I beheld my true love's secret,
When the shining of the sunset glow still lingered in the skies;
And I saw the wondrous whiteness of the soul that softly wakened,
And my heart was faint with rapture at that sudden, glad surprise.
Oh, my love, may I ne'er darken the pure fairness of thy loving,
Oh, my love, may I ne'er lessen the calm trust in those sweet eyes.

In the silence of the noon-day, when the weary workers rested,
To mine ears was borne the murmur of their passionate refrain:
'Let us love, for that we're longing—give us love, for that we're waiting.'
And I saw the hidden meaning of the burden and the strain.
Oh, my brothers, how ye shame me with the greatness of your loving;
Oh, my brothers, never shall your hands reach out to me in vain.

In the silence of the sunrise to my heart God's heart lay open,
And the radiance of the world new-born 'twas given me to see;
And I knew the pain and wonder and the beauty were but tokens
Of the love wherewith He draws us to Himself eternally.
Oh, my God, may I ne'er shadow the bright glory of Thy loving,
Oh, my God, may I, through love and strife, be ever nearing Thee.

H. M. FOSTER.

THE ENCHANTED FOREST OF WITCH ELMS.

BY HON. MRS. W. F. MAITLAND.

CHAPTER III.

How many times in the course of the next few months had his mother's kind ways almost made Prince Ulric confide in her, as she had truly guessed; but he knew well what was required of him, and how could he confess that he had given his heart into the keeping of a little damsel of no degree? It was terrible the more he reflected; his chivalry had helped him to conceal his feelings from Pearl herself. How could he speak of them under the circumstances? And he tried to believe that he rejoiced there was no love for him on her part. Did he not know this, from the frank, open way she would always talk and confide in him, gazing at him all the time with those wide-open innocent brown eyes? Yes; he thought that he rejoiced for her, and yet in weaker moments he longed, he alone knew how desperately, to feel that she cared, if ever so little, about him.

Just when his love had reached this distracting stage, a disturbance broke out on the frontier of Rubiania. It was not then very serious, but it evidently needed to be quelled by the king's army, led by the prince's strong arm, and so it happened that he had to shake off his melancholy thoughts, don his armour instead, and remember the great name he had ever borne in battle.

The day on which the despatch had been brought which decided the king that an immediate advance of his troops was necessary, was a memorable one, not only to the prince, but to Pearl also. She had been busy at a very favourite employment of hers—namely, painting; but ever the faces she drew bore a resemblance to the countenance which, alas! in spite of the prince's belief, was fast filling all her thoughts.

She tore up her work as she perceived this, and was about to turn impatiently to her embroidery frame, when the sound of a horse's hoofs on the turf outside the cottage—a sound that was

now very familiar to her—made her spring from her seat. It was, as she had rightly guessed, the prince; but as she stood at the window she had to shade her eyes with her hands to see him, in the distance where he rode, for the sun was very golden in the west behind him, as it was getting near the evening.

Suddenly she noticed him pull his horse up almost on its haunches, and turn in the saddle, as if he heard something behind him. This was soon explained by a further galloping sound, much louder this time, and a troop of mounted men rode up to him, the leader, who was in very rich attire, uncovering his head as he approached, and, springing from his horse, handed the prince something, kneeling on one knee as he did so. What this could mean Pearl's education had taught her, and she knew that the Baron Monthemart, the name the prince had given as his—and truly, for it was one of his lesser titles—was much more than a simple or even noble gentleman. No one unless of royal blood could be thus treated. Who could he be? she wondered. Why, yes, in a flash, she saw, she understood—he could be none other than the prince; for *he*, he was called Ulric, and the king's son bore that name too! Yes, she had heard that long, long ago. Oh, foolish girl, not to have guessed it before—before what? Yes, to think that her grandmother's friend, for so Pearl chose to call him now to herself, was none other than their future king.

Poor Pearl, it was a terrible blow to her, though 'Why, why,' she kept saying to herself, 'do I mind that he is of such high degree? Is it not a great honour that our king's son should visit us in our cottage?'

But try to persuade herself as she would, she knew in her heart of hearts how glad she would have been had the Prince Ulric been even as herself, a simple peasant.

After the prince had ridden away—for he found by the despatch brought to him he must do so, without the smallest delay, even to take the hastiest farewell at that little cottage that his heart ached to reach—after he had gone, Pearl still stood at the window, gazing out drearily; the usual brightness departed from her face, and as the last flicker of steel or scarlet disappeared from sight, hot tears welled up in her eyes, and, covering her face with her hands, she remained for some time struggling with her feelings and her tears.

Her grandmother's entrance roused her, and recovering herself sufficiently to murmur some excuse, she fled from the

room to her own apartment, there to endeavour as far as could be to remove the traces of her tears. She was in some measure successful, and she trusted to her grandmother's dim eyes for the rest.

And when she returned a short while afterwards to their little sitting-room, she found that the old woman, who had been buying their weekly simple store, was full of news. She had heard the proclamation of the approaching war in the market-place, she said, and, greatly to her granddaughter's astonishment, she repeated all she had learnt about it.

'Why, grandmother,' Pearl exclaimed in surprise, 'never before have you told me aught that goes on in the world outside.'

'Thou art older, child,' replied the old woman, laying her hand affectionately on the girl's head; ''tis time thou shouldest know somewhat more than goes on in our quiet home.'

There was something in the kind touch and in the words that made Pearl, she knew not why, cling for a moment to the old woman and hide her aching eyes on her shoulder.

But another blow awaited poor Pearl before the evening was out; a terrible thought had come into her mind.

'Grandmother,' she exclaimed suddenly, 'in the warfare of this country of ours, who commands—leads our army?'

'Commands—leads?' answered the old woman. 'Who should but our prince, who has so often successfully led it to glory and renown? Thou knowest not, Pearl, but our king, since a hurt that he received in the chase long years gone by, has never again sat his horse, and the prince has ever been our great leader in all our wars, even from a stripling, and he has proved his courage and ability as a general in many a combat.'

Pearl did not speak again; she knew well the peril that Prince Ulric would be now exposed to, and the thought at first terrified her too much for speech. As it was time for her grandmother and her to retire for the night, she trusted that her silence would pass unnoticed by the old woman.

Turmoil and fatigue were now the prince's lot, and he had to be on the alert continually to prevent a surprise. It was but an old grievance, a border disturbance, that had broken out, but like many such that keep reappearing, it was difficult to quell, more so than the prince had believed. In the encounter his method of fighting put the enemy to flight for a time, but in a while, recovering themselves, they pressed back again and again, and proved themselves truly brave, if in the wrong.

Seeing that his troops were becoming discouraged, the prince felt it was a case of now or never, and, rallying his forces with a supreme effort, he made one of his celebrated headlong charges, succeeded in routing the enemy completely, and the battle was at length won.

Then, and only then, he found that he had received a wound, a rather bad sword cut in the shoulder, and it was bleeding profusely. No time had he given before to think of wounds or aught else but to push on to victory; but now he allowed his wound to be attended to, and through the night that followed the aching of it formed a suitable accompaniment to his anxious thoughts, for he could not divest himself of the idea that Pearl was in danger, how or why he could not explain to himself. He, besides, continually wondered if she had noticed the discontinuing of his visits, and longed that it had been possible for him to have explained his absence. Once he thought he saw her in a white dress that clung to her in folds; a strange light was emanating from it in circles, one marking out the hem where it touched her feet. A brilliant star shone on her forehead, and her face, lit up by it, bore a rapt expression, half hopeful, half triumphant. In endeavouring to call her by name the prince awoke, to find it was but a dream.

It was some time still before the prince could travel the leagues there were between him and his home. When he did so, he met with a brilliant welcome. His wound, which had been much worse than he had chosen to believe, made him a greater hero than ever in the loyal people of Rubiania's eyes, and he was received with acclamations.

During the long time he was away—and it was a long time—Pearl had, outwardly, at any rate, recovered her usual brightness. A high resolve shone in her brown eyes. She had bravely roused herself after the prince's departure, saying to herself, 'I cannot fight for my country, but I believe and hope there is something I can do, if only my grandmother will help and teach me.' For no one knew better than Pearl how profoundly clever her grandmother was; and besides, had she not heard her say to the prince, "Twas only to be done in one way'? And if there was a way, why could not she, Pearl, learn it, and do it? Yes; she purposed to take on herself the freeing of the forest from its hateful spell. How she knew not; but she felt she could learn, she could try, if only she could persuade her grandmother to help her. She feared it would be a great difficulty.

But, to her astonishment, this was not the case, as she found out when she first coaxed the old woman to divulge what she knew.

Her grandmother remained for a while silent, and then took Pearl's face in her hands, scanning it attentively. At length she spoke.

'Though I know that very brave is thy heart, 'tis not only courage will be wanted on thy part. Very pure and true it is, I know, am sure; but 'tis not all—canst persevere, canst purpose to endure?'

Pearl's eyes answered, as plainly as her lips said bravely, that she would try her utmost for the country's sake.

'For the country's sake?' returned the old woman, rather mockingly; 'for the country's sake alone?'

But here Pearl's eyes drooped, and her true heart would not allow her to say for it alone; she knew whose heartfelt wish it was that she longed to accomplish. And her grandmother did not tease her any further.

And now every evening did they both sit together, and search through old worm-eaten manuscripts that Pearl's grandmother drew from a very ancient press that stood in the sitting-room, and which had three locks to it, and was besides strongly bound and clamped with copper and silver. Together they perused the yellow parchments, and when they lighted on what they searched for, in a manuscript, Pearl copied it in her fine handwriting, and then committed it to memory. And once, when Pearl wavered in courage at something that seemed too dreadful to face, that she learnt one night, it was the old woman who encouraged her, saying—

'Said I not thou wouldst want perseverance, child? Now must thou not flinch. Remember the light shall preserve thee; ever bear in mind to keep thy feet treading in it; never leave its trail; never for an instant step aside from it; remember the adage thou hast learnt about it.'

And so Pearl continued her study of the ancient parchments, and the time was fast drawing near for her to put in practice what she had learnt, and to make her brave attempt. The resolve had given to Pearl's face the one thing she had lacked, as all true unselfish purpose must. Brightness her countenance had ever possessed; but now perseverance, aspiration, and hope beamed forth from her calm eyes, and she seemed to tread on air as she performed her daily duties. All this the old woman *remarked with increasing satisfaction.*

CHAPTER IV.

IT was the evening of the fourth day after the prince's return to the castle. Not a moment had he had, with all the imperative duties that had met him on his return home, to mount his horse and ride in the direction that he longed to take. There had been a grand banquet on this evening in question, and the castle had been thronged with guests. The prince was wearied out and surfeited with flattery and congratulations, and he was thoroughly thankful that the time had arrived when he could retire to rest. Sleep, alas! however, seldom comes to the most tired, and the prince felt far too wakeful to attempt to seek his couch. He continued instead to pace up and down one of his apartments, till an all-powerful impulse seized him. As it did so, he paused before a mirror, lit with lights in silver sconces, and surveyed himself.

'Fine clothes for a midnight ramble,' he murmured. 'Why, I look fitter for a bridal;' for he was dressed in rose-coloured velvet, slashed with white satin, and embroidered with silver. After a moment's reflection, however, he did not change his attire, but, removing his shoes with their large rosettes, he drew on a long pair of Spanish leather boots, enveloped himself in a cloak, which in the fashion of the day completely covered his clothes, felt that his sword was in place, took his hat, and, drawing back the embroidered velvet curtains from one of the windows, proceeded to unfasten it.

It was a dark night; the stars shone fitfully as they escaped from the thick clouds that were flying past them.

The prince descended a few steps that led into the garden. Oh, how cool and delightful it all seemed after those over-heated reception rooms! The darkness smelt so sweetly of night-scented flowers. The prince paused to draw a deep breath of recovered freedom, and then went quickly through the garden to a small door in the thick wall. Here he waited for an instant till the sentinel's tread had gone by, and then, unlocking the door, he passed out into the darkness beyond.

The irresistible impulse was to gaze upon that little cottage, the casket of Pearl, his treasure, as he termed it to himself; to-morrow, he determined, he must make time to see her, and for to-night he felt the sight of the little dwelling would be balm to his spirit.

It was a long walk, but each step seemed to heal the throbbing in the prince's temples. He crossed, as he went, a little wood, whose pathways he knew well, for they shortened the distance between the castle and the little cottage. Oh, how lovely it all seemed to the tired prince—the delicious coolness, the softness of the turf his feet were pressing, the faint shining of occasional stars on some twig or leaf that held a dewdrop!

'Oh, that that accursed forest were even as this restful green wood!' he said to himself; and then he thought, as he had often done before this, how cleverly Pearl's grandmother had ever evaded his questions as to the spell. Yes; he had always felt she was parrying his inquiries, but, in her presence, she held a power over him that he was not blind to.

The prince's character was a masterful one, and he rebelled against this power, as he had done ofttimes when he reflected on it.

But soon thoughts of a sweeter, tenderer nature filled his brain, for he was now within a short distance of the place he had learnt to love best on earth. Ah! there it was—he could see it distinctly now, for the clouds had just then cleared away—and he thought how peaceful it looked in the now bright starlight. What a contrast it was to the horrible forest, so near it in its blackness! How the prince hated it and its evil sway! How gruesome it looked! He could have thought that its branches were curling and writhing like serpents, although no breeze was stirring. Ah! now he was near enough to see the door of the cottage where he had first caught sight of her at her spinning-wheel. Was it years ago? for so it seemed to him.

But ever as he tried to conjure her up to his mind's eye as he had first seen her, radiant with happiness, the vision of her as he had seen her in his dream was the only one that would appear, and—ah! what was that?—for at that instant the door of the cottage opened, and forth came indeed—his dream—just as he had seen her in it, in shimmering garments of snowy whiteness, that clung about her in folds—yes, and the light just the same, only there was more of it. She seemed, as he gazed, to float along, her hands outstretched before her, the light forming a path for her feet to tread in; indeed, she appeared to be following the light, for it spread before her, as well as around her, and ever a wail of sweet music came from her lips as she passed on.

The prince was held spellbound for an instant, as if it were

truly a vision that he looked on, but the power of movement returning, he saw, to his horror, that she was swiftly crossing the portion of turf that intervened between the cottage and the forest. In an instant he had dashed after her, intending to call her by name, to save her from the danger she was approaching; but, to his dismay, he found he could not utter a sound, and what was stranger even, his fleet footsteps did not bring him within reach of her. Ah! now the light before her had actually touched the terrible branches. As it did so, he saw, to his great surprise, that they parted, forming a pathway, and the sweet dirge that issued from her lips continuing, she floated straight into it, the light passing on through the blackness before her as a silver band.

The prince followed instantly, treading almost in her footsteps, but ever unable to reach her or to utter a sound. He noticed, as they passed along, how the branches ever unlocked themselves, as it were, before her, and shrunk back as if in fear; but if so, they had none for him, and he felt, as he glanced at them, that the light in which he trod alone protected him. For long, grey, writhing twig-like fingers approached as near as they seemed able, plucking at him as he passed—oh, how loathsome and horrid they were!—and he could discern weird distorted faces in the gnarled and twisted knobs on the branches.

The silence continued unbroken, save for the sweet wailing before him. Where were they going? Would they pass along like this for ever? he thought, for it seemed to him already an age of time since they entered the forest. And, oh! how could she so undauntedly sing among those horrible surroundings? Ah! what was that gleaming in the distance? In his astonishment he swerved a little, a very little, from the light, but in that instant grey fingers clutched at him, indeed, seized him, but fortunately it was only his cloak they fastened on, and, leaving it in their clutches, he drew back, and, drawing his sword, cut at the hateful things. Twang! twang! the prince's sword snapped in two, and with a revolting hissing and gnashing, a grey evil face peered out at him, the grey lips uncovering the grey teeth that had made the gruesome sound he had heard.

The prince grasped the hilt firmly of his broken sword, and carefully kept from henceforth in the path of light. They were now approaching the gleam that the prince had noticed, and he found it came from a large piece of water or lake that lay not far from them, and which reflected the stars distinctly.

The prince felt he could breathe better as they emerged from the hateful pathway on to a space of turf that lay around the lake, which seemed in the heart of the forest. The comfort of having no longer to elude the loathsome grey fingers was not of long duration, for the prince was presently horrified at Pearl's further danger. She stepped on ever fearlessly till she reached the borders of the lake, and here, changing her dirge-like song to a quicker measure, she sang the following imperious words :—

'Arise and face me, Scalipur,
Thou monster of the deep,
Arise, and face thy conqueror,
After thine ages' sleep.
Dost think I fear thee?
Thou shalt feel
How thy foul strength can quail;
Not I alone,—the light, the light,
It shall and can prevail.'

Immediately after her song ceased, the waters of the lake arose as if a waterspout troubled them, and out of this came, dragging the foulest looking limbs after it, a monster, which advanced up the bank to meet Pearl. It was so dreadful to contemplate that the prince's flesh crept at the sight of it. Somewhat in form like a gigantic octopus, but with ghastly heads at the end of each writhing limb. Scaly, grey, glistening, clammy-looking, ever it crept nearer; the huge head in the centre of its noisome body was hooded rather after the manner of a cobra's; the malevolent eyes shot in and out as if they were also attached to tentacles. Its progress was revolting, it almost seemed to—if such a word can be used—to slime along.

The prince, grasping his sword, was dashing to Pearl's rescue, for he expected to see her dragged back into the waters of the lake, by this foul embodiment of evil of all kinds that she had addressed as Scalipur. But even as the prince started to her help, he stumbled, and fell over an old stone that was half hidden in the long grass, and at the same moment the long grey gnarled branches, or rather arms, of an exceedingly old tree, at the foot of which the stone lay, caught him, and drew him up into their grasp, holding him powerless as an infant.

It was terrible for him to have to watch what followed in helplessness, and without even the power to call out. But watch he did, hardly breathing, as he saw how every time a horrid tentacle sought to catch hold of Pearl, instead of receding, she

turned towards it, and when the light fell on it, it shrivelled up, and fell away from the main body. This had happened scores of times, and the tentacles were visibly decreasing in number, and the prince felt hope rising in his heart, though the centre hooded head of this pestilence from time to time shot fiery darts at Pearl; but the light she was surrounded by seemed always to render them powerless to harm her.

Suddenly the prince saw that Scalipur's scintillating eyes had caught sight of him imprisoned in the tree; a baneful gleam came into them, and this time it shot a dart in his direction instead of at Pearl.

In surprise she half turned, and caught sight of the prince. The monster's eyes glittered with horrid joy, although his dart had fallen short of the prince this time, and in a flash Pearl understood his evil intent. Forgetting everything save the prince's danger, she stepped back from the light, to receive the dart intended, this time with certainty, for the prince, and which must have proved fatal to him. It struck her in the heart, and without the protection of the light, she fell, with one short sigh, lifeless, before the tree, with arms outstretched as though to protect him still.

A moan of anguish escaped the prince; his voice had returned at the same instant; he felt himself free—the old tree had released him from its iron grip.

Without a pause the prince launched himself on the horrible Scalipur, his broken sword in his hand. He would not live, he would die too, for he knew he had no chance.

At his furious onslaught the huge monster appeared, to his great surprise, to draw itself in, and, as it were, away from him, and slipping down the banks all huddled together, as if mortally wounded, it disappeared in its waters. At the same instant the lake disappeared too, and in the centre, where it had been, arose a stately, beautiful palace surrounded by terraces and gardens.

The prince heeded this not, nor the fact that every tree was uprearing itself in recovered freedom and renewed beauty, or that long velvety glades stretched on every hand through the now lovely forest. How, above all, the glorious morning sun was pouring its golden light down the boles of the trees, into every corner of this once darkened spot; how the birds appeared, pouring forth such a song of rejoicing, that the very air vibrated with their melody.

What mattered it, what mattered that everything was alive and happy, when it had all been bought at such a price, at the sacrifice of that true heart? And Pearl was lying there so still, but with a happy peaceful smile resting on her beautiful features.

He cast himself down beside her in an agony. All around her prostrate form the sweetest white violets had blossomed, surrounding her in a fragrant design.

'Pearl! Pearl!' the prince cried, clenching his hands, to prevent the anguished sobs from escaping that rent and shook him.

Then he became aware of some one beside him, and, turning, found it was a radiant being. She looked as if she must have risen from the lake, for water was dripping still from her pale-green flowing garments. Crowfoot, water-violets, and forget-me-nots clung to her drapery, and a crown of pure white water-lilies surmounted her long shining hair.

'Grieve not so bitterly, prince,' she said, 'but rather take comfort at the thought of the great work thy princess has achieved so bravely and so faithfully. Marvellously well has the old adage been fulfilled, and "brave, pure, and true" has been the heart that has broken the spell that enchained this lovely spot. I am the Fairy Ripple and the godmother of the Princess Sunshine, not the grandmother, though *you* remember me as an old woman. I took her away when a baby from her home, because I saw that her beautiful nature was being ruined by a most foolish upbringing. And she is now, as you know, everything that is good and charming, and I have taken care that in learning, and all else that is becoming to her station, she is fit to reign as a good and a great queen. See,' went on the fairy, bending over Pearl as she spoke, 'you must not fear for her any longer, prince, for she is even now recovering;' for indeed Pearl had opened her eyes, and was gazing first in bewilderment, and then in content, at the sight of the prince, alive and uninjured.

As their eyes met, words seemed useless, and the fairy, perceiving this, took Pearl's hand, and placing it in Prince Ulric's, said—

'Be happy, both of you. Nature formed you for each other. Look there!' and waving her beautiful arm in the direction of the glittering palace, she continued, 'That is my wedding gift to you both. May you spend many happy years in it.'

Down the steps of the terraces, and advancing towards them, came the King and Queen of Rubiania and their court, and also the grand duke, the princess's father, his eyes full of glad expectancy; whilst among the train that accompanied him was no other than the Countess Dusseldorf, grown older, as shown by her gait, and, it is to be hoped, wiser also.

But Prince Ulric could see no one, could greet no one, till he, still holding his princess's hand, had pressed a first kiss on her forehead, and she in answer glanced at him with the truest, tenderest happiness shining in her innocent brown eyes, whilst everything in nature around joined in rejoicing at the recovery of 'Sunshine.'

A LINNET'S SONG.

No skylark I, to scale the blue
  Of God's high heaven at early morn,
  And herald in a day new-born
With rapturous pæans pure and true.

No nightingale am I, to fill
  A golden night with golden song;
  No mavis, that I can prolong
My music with unerring trill.

I cannot soar on tireless wing,
  No skill have I in which to trust;
  'I do but sing because I must,
And pipe but as the linnets sing.'

ANNIE L. KNOWLES.

SPIDERS.

BY REV. H. MILNES.

'Life is a cobweb, be we e'er so gay,
And death a broom that sweeps it all away.'

'SPRING'S delights are now returning.' Yes, outside the house this is true, for we see it in the broad green meadows, in the first fair flowers, in the fresh buds of the trees, in the hum of the busy bee, in the song of the cuckoo, and in the joyous trill of the lark; but inside the house, oh no—emphatically no. Not spring's *delights;* anything but that. The housemaid, to whom the existence of a spider's web seems a kind of reproach, is bent on having what she calls a 'spring cleaning.' The carpets are to be taken up, the old furniture must be moved, the lumber room is to be 'cleared out,' and my study, my sanctum, is to be ruthlessly invaded and turned upside down, 'because,' as she says, 'those nasty spiders have spun their webs everywhere.' I do not know why it is, but there seems to be a natural antipathy to spiders in the constitution of some people. They are looked upon as commonplace, repulsive creatures, infesting our houses, annoying us by their presence and their dirty webs; and cruel, too, little monsters, busy from morn till night, or more often from night till morn, weaving their snares to entrap the curious, unwary fly, lying in wait in dark, damp corners and crevices, murdering their prey relentlessly, and sucking their very life-blood.

'Ingenious insect—but of ruthless mould,
Whose savage craft as nature taught, designs
A mazy web of death;—the filmy lines
That from the circling labyrinth, enfold
Each thoughtless fly that wanders near thy hold,
Sad victim of thy guile:—nor aught avail
His silken wings, nor coat of glossy mail,
Nor varying lines of azure, jet, or gold.'

And yet a spider is one of the most wonderful of God's creatures, formed for useful ends, and perfectly adapted to the office which it was intended to fulfil.

Certainly there is not another creature armed with such a fearful array of weapons as the spider, unless it is the dragon-fly. It has poisonous fangs, the under surface of which are grooved, so as to facilitate the transmission of the poison. An ordinary house-fly with a pin through his body seems little the worse, but if bitten by a spider, death is almost instantaneous.

There are wonderful stories told of the poisonous nature of the bite being fatal to man; but certainly no English spider is capable of biting so as to greatly injure the human skin. Still, if you allow a common garden spider to run down the back of your hand, and then suddenly stop him by putting your finger on his two hind legs, he will not turn, but he will try and plunge his fangs into you, working them vigorously. No evil results, however, will follow, except, perhaps, the formation of a small white blister; but the experiment will have convinced you that a spider can bite.

What a wonderful thing is the spider's web! The closely compacted nests of birds, the mathematically correct cells of the bees, the galleried homes of the ants, the strong barricades of the beaver, are not more marvellous than the spider's web. Look at its framework; how delicate, yet how firm! its construction so clever and so sensitive!

> 'See how threads with threads entwine!
> If the evening wind alone
> Breathe upon it, all is gone;
> Thus within the darkest place
> Creative wisdom thou mayest trace:
> Feeble though the insect be,
> Still he speaks through that to thee.'

Here, in my garden, is a wall presenting many requisites for a spider's comfortable domestic arrangements. The mortar has been broken off in several places by exposure to wind and weather, and the wall itself is built with supports or small buttresses projecting from it to ten or twelve inches, and so forming excellent coigns of vantage for the construction of a spider's web. A fine specimen of the 'garden spider' has taken advantage of the situation, and is waiting for his prey. He is suspended in the centre of his net, with his head downward as a matter of course. His web is a very complicated structure, and is composed of various materials. The side-lines are made of a fluid which hardens as it is spun; the cross-bars

are elastic and never harden, but are covered with small globules of a transparent gum, dotted all along them.

The threads of the web are very fine, simple ones being one-thousandth of an inch in thickness, and the glutinous ones rather more. The web will often contain more than three hundred longitudinal threads, and as many transverse ones, so elaborate is this apparently simple net. Think of the manufacture of a rope, the twisting of which needs much human labour, besides all that employed in cultivating the hemp, gathering it, preparing it for spinning, and manufacturing into yarn; whereas our little despised but busy worker produces from certain glands within its own body the substance from which the almost invisible silk is produced, and forms it into a cord much more rapidly than the eye can see the process. It is said that an ordinary garden spider can complete a perfect net in less than an hour.

I wonder why the spider watches in an inverted position. Perhaps it is that the eyes, of which there are eight, curiously arranged, may have as large a field of view as possible. Yet though blessed with eight eyes, and able to see in all directions, their sense of touch is far more acute than that of sight.

If you take a common house-fly, and gradually bring it nearer and nearer to the spider, and not allow it to touch the web, the spider will take no notice of it; but the moment you drop the fly into the web it will be seized.

There is also another fact that puzzles me. Why do spiders spin their webs in closets or places which are entirely dark? To what purpose can the silken snare be spread? No doubt the primary object is to entrap winged insects; but these places, from which light is excluded, yield so few. Upon what do they subsist?

They have also a singular plan of strengthening their webs by suspending pieces of wood, stone, or other substances to them, so as to obtain steadiness in a strong wind. I have heard of a spider lifting a piece of wood, two inches in length and the size of a lead pencil, five feet from the ground.

It is said that there are two places that are free from spiders' webs. They are never set on a cedar roof, nor on the wood of the chestnut tree. The roof of Beaulieu Abbey is made of this latter wood, and is singularly free from a web of any sort.

The scientific name for spiders is 'Arachnidæ,' as a graceful tribute to their skill and industry; for, if Ovid's story be true, Arachne was well skilled at the loom, and had the

presumption to challenge Minerva. She was, however, defeated, and hung herself in despair, when the goddess, moved with pity, changed her into a spider.

> 'Her usual features vanished from their place,
> Her body lessened all, but more her face;
> Her slender fingers hanging on each side,
> With many joints, the use of legs supplied;
> A spider's bag the rest, from which she gives
> A thread, and still by constant weaving, lives.'

Spiders are very pugnacious, and naturally ferocious, especially the females, who often kill the males, and more often than not make a feast of them. Yet they are said to be capable of being tamed, and there is an instance given of a prisoner under Louis XIV. who succeeded in doing so. His name was Pellisson-Fontanier. He was the author of several books, and offended the monarch by some of his publications, written during his imprisonment. The king therefore ordered him to be deprived of pen, ink, and paper. He, however, turned his attention to a spider which was his companion in captivity, and succeeded in bringing it to a state of docility and obedience.

In spite, however, of his bad character, the spider is held in great estimation by some. This perhaps may be owing in some measure to the old legend, that when our Saviour lay as a helpless babe in the manger at Bethlehem, a spider spun a beautiful web over the spot where he lay, and so preserved his life from his enemies.

Another reason may be from the superstitious idea that it brings prosperity. Ill luck is supposed to overtake those who kill or even injure a spider. An old folk-lore rhyme says—

> 'If you wish to live and thrive,
> Let the spider run alive.'

Then again, from very early times the spider has been a favourite charm in the cure of certain diseases. Thus, the parents of a child afflicted with whooping-cough are recommended to search for a spider in their own house, and, having found it, to hold it over the child's head and say—

> 'Spider, as you waste away,
> Whooping-cough no longer stay.'

The spider is hung up in a bag, and as it gradually dries up, so, too, the cough will gradually disappear. Rather hard lines on the spider, don't you think?

Dr. Graham, in his 'Domestic Medicine,' prescribes spider's web for ague and intermittent fever, while the insect itself, rolled in butter, is said to be a specific for jaundice.

Longfellow, in his 'Evangeline,' writes—

'But the brave Basil resumed, and his words were milder and gayer:—
"Only beware of the fever, my friends, beware of the fever!
For it is not like that of our cold Acadian climate,
Cured by wearing a spider hung round one's neck in a nutshell!"'

There are also certain stories connected with spiders that give a special charm to them, such as the one about Robert Bruce, who, noticing a small spider near his bed try six times, unsuccessfully, to attach its thread to a beam, said, 'Now, shall this creature teach me what I am to do, for I also have failed six times?' The spider made a seventh effort, and succeeded. Bruce also took heart again, and was successful, and never afterwards sustained a defeat. In remembrance of this incident it is considered a foul crime for any one of the name of Bruce to injure a spider.

There is also a story of Mahomet, who, in his flight from Mecca, being closely pursued by his enemies, took refuge in a cave; when suddenly an acacia tree, in full leaf, sprung up at the entrance; a wood-pigeon had its nest in the branches; and a spider had woven its net between the tree and the cave. When his pursuers saw this, they felt persuaded that no one could have passed that way, and so continued their journey. Thus Mahomet was saved.

Spiders are spread over almost every portion of the earth. Those, however, of the largest size, the strangest forms, and most brilliant and varied colours, are found in the tropics. There is one, found in Paraguay, which forms a spherical cocoon for its eggs an inch in diameter, of a yellow silk, which the inhabitants of that district spin on account of the permanency of its colour. The ladies of Bermuda make use of the threads of the 'silk-spider' for sewing purposes.

There is an interesting little spider, common in the South of France, called the 'trap-door spider.' It excavates for itself a deep gallery, and closes its entrance with a door which it is impossible to open except from the inside. A silken thread holds it in its place.

Spiders are thought to be good living barometers, for they are in the highest degree sensitive to every change in the atmosphere, and by their appearance or retirement, their weaving

and their general habits, they foretell the coming changes in the weather.

Among a collection of weather rhymes for wind and rain, I find the following :—

'When you see the gossamer flying,
Then be sure the air is drying.'

'The subtle spider never spins
But on dark days his slimy gins.'

'Hark! how the chairs and tables crack!
Old Betty's joints are on the rack.'

'The soot falls down, the spaniels sleep,
And spiders from their cobwebs peep.'

THE MAIN CHANCE.

BY CHRISTABEL R. COLERIDGE, AUTHOR OF 'WAYNFLETE,' 'THE TENDER MERCIES OF THE GOOD,' 'THE PROPHET'S MANTLE,' ETC.

CHAPTER XXI.

INFLUENCES.

ON the next evening Katie Fielding sat covering parish library books with brown paper in the vicarage dining-room, and thinking of the gay and festive scene at Kirkton, where *he* was rehearsing with Miss Vyner, and where *she* was altogether forgotten.

This was not precisely the case. The dress rehearsal of the play before a select audience had gone off brilliantly, and the young people engaged in it were finishing the evening with a dance. Questions of finance and questions of conscience had to fall into the background, when the music sounded enticing, the dark polished floor was bare, and the hearty desire for somewhat infrequent amusement was shining out of the eyes of a set of unsophisticated and energetic young people.

Florella, who in the character of a London landlady, had been bullying Staunton as her impecunious lodger with much humour and spirit, was caught, as she reappeared after changing her dress, by Max Mervyn, who demanded the next dance with great promptness.

He whirled her skilfully round the room, and at the first pause she complimented him on his waltzing.

'Yes,' he said, with complacency, 'I was always reckoned a good one on the light fantastic! I never try things that I can't do. You don't see me going out hunting till I can take my fences with the best. Bikes and hops were always in my line. But I didn't ask you to dance, Miss Vyner, only for the dancing. Waynflete has advised me to ask your opinion on a delicate matter of the utmost importance. Won't you come

and sit in this window seat? We shall just be supposed to be sitting out, you know—awful privilege I should think it, of course, and I've Waynflete's leave, you know.'

'I shall be very glad if my opinion is worth anything,' said Florella, with a twinkle in the depths of her eyes, as she sat down in the corner indicated, while Max placed himself in an attentive attitude by her side.

'It's just this,' said Max, who not being allowed to possess himself of Florella's fan, buttoned and unbuttoned his own gloves with vigour. 'I've known Miss Fielding ever since she was a little tot in a pinafore. Her father was a beneficed clergyman in our neighbourhood. We did the paddling in the burn business, you know, and I feel that I stand in the place of a brother to her. Now, I put it to you, Miss Vyner, ought I to stand seeing that fellow Wickham playing fast and loose with her, and breaking her heart, paying attentions on the sly that he don't mean seriously, and—and behaving, I believe, like a scoundrel? Ought I to stand it?'

'I suppose I mustn't ask you why you think he has done so?' said Florella, without as much surprise as he expected.

'Well, no, I don't want to round on her. She never had any sense. But if I go to Wickham he'd say, "Who the dickens are you?" and tell lies into the bargain. If Mrs. Lennox knew, she might bully the poor little girl—ladies do bully their governesses, you know; and if I speak to Katie, why, she'd never forgive me. So Waynflete thought—so he said I'd better consult you—that you were friends with her, and when you curled your hair—young ladies' confidences——'

'I am a friend of hers,' said Florella, in her soft steady tones; 'but she has never told me anything about Mr. Wickham.'

'But couldn't you worm it out of her?' said Max, imploringly. 'I've mulled the business already. Couldn't you say he ought to come on the square, if he comes at all, confound him! I declare I'd kick the whole coal company into space before I'd stand seeing her made a fool of; though it would be no end awkward to quarrel with Wickham just now, and of course—I'm not a green-horn—any other girl, you know, I might understand, that a lark was a lark—it don't, of course, affect his views on the coal-pits. But, you know, Miss Vyner, stiff bows when other people are there, and hand squeezes and whispers on the sly? Well, of course, Miss Vyner, we've all done it. But circumstances alter cases; and when a young lady has no parents, nor

a brother, and is awfully nice looking, and as much a lady as any one, why, it's not the *thing*, Miss Vyner. It can't be supposed that it is.'

Max was crimson, between his struggle to take the tone of a man of the world and his genuine interest in his old playmate.

Florella was silent for a moment, then she said, 'I suppose, Mr. Mervyn, that you have grounds for what you say? You know Miss Fielding would never forgive a mistake on such a matter.'

'Well, I can't help it if she won't,' said Max, heaving a deep sigh. 'But, Miss Vyner, will you try?'

'Yes,' said Florella, 'I will try.'

She spoke gravely, and the waltz being over, and another one imminent, Wickham himself came up and asked her to dance. She turned a little pale, though she went away with him, leaving any embarrassment to Max, who looked at once guilty and furious.

Florella felt herself in a moral puzzle. Slight as the indication might be which identified Jasper Wickham with Jim Randall, her eyes, accustomed to delicate outlines and accurate observation, saw with convincing clearness the likeness to him both of the old father and of the young photograph. Mrs. Randall, too, had let slip that her lost son was an engineer. Granting the facts, however, they carried no personal discredit with them; rather the contrary, since the young man had suffered for sins not his own, and had taken upon himself a heavy burden. If the story was true, she held a trump card in her hand; she had only casually to mention Molly Edgell, indeed, only not be careful to avoid mentioning her, to ensure a hearing from Wickham on any subject that she chose. She did not quite know what was the fair thing to do, and she felt that the beginning of confidence is, like strife, as the letting out of water; besides, she was bound by her promise to Molly. 'I think I should have to tell him myself that I know Molly, and have seen her friends before I told either Guy or Katie,' she thought to herself, 'if I come to think that they ought to know.'

But, as with faculties, the boundary of which she did not know how to define, she considered Jasper Wickham, she became aware that behind his pleasant and casual talk of the play and the dancing, he too was occupied with her. She felt

that it was possible that he would guess her thoughts, and she became conscious of an intense inward antagonism to him, an antagonism that lay behind all her desire to circumvent him about Katie, and was deeper even than her personal distrust of him. She began to realise that it was possible that she might become afraid of him.

She glanced at Guy as she passed him, and he smiled back at her gaily. He looked handsome and happy. There were times when youth and happy love asserted themselves in Guy's complex nature, when the impulse to be one among his fellows was so strong that it pushed out of sight both the cares of this world and the dark terrors of another. He was so proud of Florella, of her sweet looks, of her little air of distinction among the provincial maidens round her! He thought her soft blue gown, chosen perhaps to suit his taste, so much prettier than anybody else's! Her presence was so peace-giving, so *comfortable* in the best sense to him, that his troubles died away, and he felt like a different person. He was young and light, and music and a festive occasion appealed to him as they only do to hard-working youth. Mr. Raby was a kindly host. He knew all the dancers there, and called most of them by their Christian names. Nearly all of them had pulled crackers and scrambled for sugar-plums in jackets and short frocks at his Christmas parties, and he delighted now in setting them to dance an impromptu cotillion, in which the presents were nothing more than buttonholes and chocolate creams; when each laughing, blushing girl felt that her choice of a partner might reveal or must hide the secret of her heart; and in which, when Florella shook her head at Guy and gave her hand to Cuthbert Staunton, on the ground of having bullied him so shamefully in the play, every one laughed and clapped and repeated the excellent joke to each other. Poor Katie! How much she would have enjoyed such an evening! How little she guessed how the thought of her troubles coloured the thoughts of some who were engaged in it!

The innocent reaction into light-hearted gaiety could not last very long for Guy; but it left gentleness and calm behind, unlike other reactions, no less natural though less wholesome—the possibility of which he knew full well. Towards the end of the evening he and Florella found themselves alone together by the fire in the big oak-panelled hall. He looked at her as if he could not look enough.

'Oh!' he said, 'why is anything intolerable when you are near me?'

'Are things "intolerable?"' she said, smiling.

'No,' he said, with energy. 'No, not while you are well and safe!'

He looked into her eyes with a latent dread in his own; but she smiled back at him.

'I am safe,' she said. 'But, Guy, I know one thing quite for certain. However you and I get our orders, through whatever channels, that which comes to us won't tell us to do anything which would not be right for all. I mean, we may be shown new spheres of action, but right and wrong is the same in every case. We can but do the best we know, and no one must do less.'

'Even if heaven and earth pass away,' said Guy, solemnly. 'Yes, that's so; I have known that always.' He paused, and then said, 'We will do the best we know.'

'We will,' said Florella.

It was all right since Guy said 'we,' and did not insist on shutting her out from his struggle.

Florella did not find it easy to do the best she knew for Katie Fielding. In the intervals of rehearsals she was to spend a few days at Ingleby Vicarage, and there were likely to be opportunities enough both for confidence and for observation.

Katie did indeed sit on the rug in Florella's bedroom at a late hour on the first night and pour out many troubles: Laura's extremely disagreeable behaviour, when Katie and she had differed about the spelling of a French word, and the dictionary had proved Laura to be right; Mrs. Lennox's dreadful proposal that she should go to the training college for teachers.

'I never thought they wanted a hard "new woman" for a governess, crammed up for modern examinations. It used to be just home love, and little dear old-fashioned ways.'

'I never heard that it was modern or new to spell French properly, and I should have thought home love would have made you wish to do your work properly,' said Florella, losing patience.

'Ah,' said Katie, pathetically, 'I suppose I am too silly even for you!'

'You are,' said Florella, who could be bracing enough, 'if you think being silly is sweet.'

'But really,' said Katie, with wide blue eyes, 'isn't it only

governessy people who mind it? Would Mr. Waynflete mind if you couldn't spell French?'

'He would mind very much if I professed to do work which I wasn't fit for.'

'You are so clever,' said Katie; and Florella felt that she could have boxed her ears with pleasure.

'I should like to give her to Molly and Constancy to *squash*,' she thought, and then reflected that squashing people was not the way to rescue them from danger.

After all, was not this folly mere fencing? She must get beyond the outworks.

'Doesn't home love make you wish to be like a sister to these girls? Is it good for them to show them that you don't care for what their mother wishes? If your influence and example was bad for them—for girls who are like your little sisters?'

Then Katie grew pale, and got up from the rug and sat nervously on the edge of her chair. She had no answer now. Her inmost soul answered for her, and she was ashamed before her own instincts.

'Katie,' said Florella, earnestly, 'I see that you are unhappy. Is it *all* the French exercises? Or the training college?'

'Quite enough,' said Katie, with a toss.

'I'm sorry if I was horrid,' said Florella, girlishly. 'I know you do care about your work, but isn't there something spoiling it?'

'No, no, no!' said Katie, laughing. 'I'm happy, awfully happy; I'll read some French. I'm not a bit unhappy, and I'm asked to the Kirkton party. It's quite too awfully jolly, and Mrs. Lennox has given me a frock. Oh no! I'm as happy as ever I can be. And it's very late; good night.'

Katie fled and left Florella feeling baffled and stupid. The work would have to be done in some other way. She could easily frighten Katie; but what was the good of that? All the soul that the poor little thing possessed was filled with another influence. Florella seemed to feel it pull against her own. A strange sense of hopelessness came over her. She hid her face, and her soul went up in a passion of appeal for the strength that others needed in the battle of life.

She slept, and she did not know that she dreamed, but she awoke with a sudden realisation of what Guy meant by that ghostly enemy that lurked within him. She longed to fly to him and seek the help which she had so bravely offered him.

Was it all nerves and imagination? She wept childish tears, and even daylight did not bring back inward courage.

On the plea of posting a letter, she went out in the morning while all the vicarage people were busy, and walked quickly along the fields by the canal towards the upper end of the town.

Presently she heard a voice calling imploringly, 'Rawdie, Rawdie, come back; come then, there's a good little dog! Rawdie! You hound! Come here, sir!' And in a minute saw Cuthbert Staunton, shouting and waving his stick over the hedge in vain. He jumped down when he saw her.

'I've been cajoled into taking that villainous little beast for a walk,' he said, 'and now he's after some poultry in that field. I know he has all the virtues besides spiritual faculties beyond most of us, but he won't do as he's told. I shall have to fetch Guy out of the mill in a minute.'

'Oh, it can't be chickens; it must be a cat,' said Florella, in shocked tones, as she scrambled quickly up the bank, and called the offender, who was seen and heard scurrying and barking at the far end of the field.

'He's coming,' she said; and in a minute Rawdie came back, wagging his tail and demanding to be lifted over the hedge, which five minutes before he had easily scrambled through.

'Oh, Rawdon Crawley! You little villain! I hope it was a cat. That's bad enough. But fowls, no gentleman chases fowls! And not to come when you're called! Your master would whip you. Nonsense! I can't reach you down there. Come through this minute, and beg Mr. Staunton's pardon.'

Rawdon presently appeared in the road, and was made to sit up on his hind legs and 'beg pardon,' which he did with a full sense of condescension to the folly of his friends.

'I'm glad he knows his mistress,' said Staunton. 'Well, Rawdie, I thought you had risen above such canine sins. But he's right enough to run to you. Guy has been another fellow since you came.'

Florella's laughing face grew grave. She looked at Staunton with a direct and simple gaze, while her lips trembled.

'Cuthbert,' she said, 'you've known before. I'm not brave at all. I'm puzzled, and I'm afraid of being frightened.'

Then a feeling of rage seized on Cuthbert, and he could hardly control it.

'Not even for Guy's sake,' he said roughly, 'must that be. He wouldn't have it!'

'No,' she said, 'it would be so much worse for him if I were. But there is no other person in the world that I can speak to but you, and I think—I am not sure—but I think I may have to settle whether a certain thing is right. If I am not sure, may I ask you? For it is a thing that one ought to be *wise* about. One might do mischief, and I cannot ask Guy. You would give me advice?'

'Certainly,' he said, 'and under the seal of confession.'

'Thank you,' she said, smiling again. 'You see, it is difficult to know the most right thing always. Good-bye. I'm glad I met you. It is very difficult to know about keeping secrets when one isn't the sort of person to judge about the wise thing.'

She went on her way with a parting word to Rawdie, her bright looks regained.

'Oh, you sweet child!' cried Cuthbert to himself. 'What wouldn't I do for you? God knows I *do* do—somewhat already.'

CHAPTER XXII.

FAIR AND SQUARE.

BUSINESS took Jasper Wickham into Ingleby on the morning after Florella's arrival at the vicarage. Among all the complications in his affairs, the most pressing was connected with Katie Fielding. She complicated both his outlook and his desires, for he did not want to give her up, yet to be called to account now for his conduct to her would be more than awkward —to come forward and announce an engagement to her seemed impossible. He was a man in whom the desire of the moment struggled hard with the plans of the future, and it was because the momentary desire sometimes got the upper hand that his life was not yet free of its handicap, and that he believed himself to be driven to expedients of which he did not always like to think.

He had been extremely angry with Katie when he had seen her in Rilston; but he knew that to drive her desperate was dangerous, and to stop all intercourse with her was disagreeable.

He was determined not to write to her. How could he get a word with her?

Fate, when duly worked, is sometimes favourable. He took

his way home past the church and school, and presently Katie emerged from the latter with a parochial-looking bag in her hand. Even a worm will turn, and even Katie was capable of revenge. She walked straight on and pretended not to see him. That could not be permitted, and he overtook her in the lane that led into the vicarage fields.

'Am I never to be forgiven?' he said, behind her.

'Never! you don't deserve to be. I did dreadfully—dreadfully wrong to miss the train, and it wasn't any good. You might have been grateful!'

'Did you want me to get you into trouble?' he said.

'You never shall again. I am going to the teachers' college after Christmas, and until then I shall be very busy. Miss Vyner's friend, Molly Edgell, is going to give me arithmetic lessons by correspondence. I've been very silly, Mr. Wickham, very. But I'm wiser now.'

'How did you say you were going to learn arithmetic, and who's your coach?' said Wickham.

'I don't know that it matters to you—Miss Edgell; she's extremely clever and learned. I can't go on like this; Florella begins to suspect me, and I want to tell her, and have her to help me, and I *will!* I know I've not been doing right—or been truthful.'

Perhaps Katie expected to be cajoled and entreated. She glanced under her eyelids, and saw, to her extreme surprise and chagrin, that he looked inattentive.

'Good morning,' she said sharply, as they came to where the lanes crossed.

'Katie,' he exclaimed, stopping, 'how you misunderstand.' But at that moment Katie caught sight of a figure coming up the lane from the fields, and did at once the worst thing possible, for she turned and fled. Wickham wheeled round, and faced Florella Vyner.

They looked each other in the eyes for a moment, then Wickham made the best of things, greeted her, and said lightly—

'My shocking bad acting the other night has been much on my mind, Miss Vyner. While you are at the vicarage could we run through our scenes, do you think? There's a point or two I should like to make.'

Florella did not answer for a moment. Then, looking away from him, she said slowly—

'Yes. As I came all the way from Hyères to act, one ought to take pains. I came home, you know, with my friend, Molly Edgell. *She* had come out to see her uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Randall, who live at Hyères, where my aunt has been spending the winter. I am very intimate with Molly; we lived together in London.'

There was a perceptible pause. Wickham took his resolution.

'Miss Vyner,' he said, 'most men would try to throw you off the scent. You and I both know that that would be vain. Miss Edgell has told you her family history, and you have divined my connection with it?'

'I saw your father,' she said.

'Ah, and you told Molly you had seen me?'

'No.'

'Or Waynflete that you had seen them?'

'No.'

'Why?'

'I did not think that it would be quite fair, unless I told you first that I had guessed about it. Besides, I promised Molly. And of course I don't know that it matters.'

'Look here,' he said, 'do you know what it is to be the son of a scoundrel? That's what the old man was.'

'*Was*,' she echoed, half under her breath.

'I dare say he has had ample time to repent, or, at least, to know that he was a fool. Well, I was ruined anyway, and I was very young. The creditors—you won't care for details—took all I had. I had something from a godmother, and I bound myself to pay the debt within a given time. I rendered myself liable for it, and they didn't prosecute. Molly didn't tell you that?'

'No—only about the allowance you made them.'

'Well, I've had uncommon luck, and I've nearly done it now. Will you be still kind and wise as you have been, and be silent? It is almost incredible that you should think of my interests where Waynflete is concerned; but you have. I am filled with admiration.'

'You seem to have acted very nobly,' she said.

'I chose an alternative. You will help me to keep to it?'

'I don't think I shall tell Mr. Waynflete,' said Florella; 'but I will not promise never to do so.'

'Why not?' he said. 'Why not? It cannot make any

difference to him. But what you have said is enough; I have no right to ask a promise.'

Florella looked steadily away from him.

'Ought you to let yourself care about Miss Fielding unless your life were free?' she said.

The phrase was childish, and she said it with difficulty.

'Miss Fielding? Oh, Miss Vyner, that's a point on which you mustn't ask me to speak. There are things a man can't say for himself. You have influence with her; I beg you to use it. I can only thank you ten thousand times for your forbearance, and beg you to continue it.'

'If I speak I will tell you first,' she said.

'I think you will not speak,' he said imploringly; and then, as she went away from him, look and accent changed, and he said, in a fierce whisper to himself, 'You *shall* not.'

Florella hurried indoors and up to her own room. She threw herself on her knees by her bed, and buried her face.

'I could hardly keep myself from promising,' she thought. 'I feel that he is going to make me.' There came over her a terror so great, so utterly disproportioned to the question at issue, that she could give it no words. She was not afraid of Wickham himself. It did not matter so enormously whether or no she kept or told his secret; but she was aware of an experience, strange, nameless. 'Oh, I know what Guy means! I know—*that!*'

It was only for a moment, for one flash of incredible sensation, and then a great stillness came upon her, and in the stillness a thought, 'I must help Mr. Wickham, and *that*, which is more than him. It's no use just resisting. I must help him; I must help the bad suggestion to change and be good.'

And just as once, nay, more than once, she had flung the whole force of her spirit in thought and prayer, in effort unspeakable to the reinforcement of her lover's strength and courage, so now, with an awful and splendid daring, she stretched out her powers to deliver the very tempter from temptation. 'Oh, turn his heart!' Then would Guy indeed be delivered. She got up from her knees, and the whole extraordinary consciousness was over, but she did not forget it. Translated into simple words of practical effort, she said to herself that she must pray not so much that Mr. Wickham might not, by clever speech or by will-power, persuade her

against her judgment, or lead Guy against his, but that he himself might have light and strength to do the right thing, whatever it was, and that that Inimical Force which dogged Guy's path might not only be resisted, but converted and redeemed. 'It's very hard,' she said, 'but nothing else would finish it.'

In a way that was stranger than all, her terror and distress passed entirely, fell back into the sphere from whence it came, and she was ready to think of what to say to Katie, very much as she might have done if it had never come upon her. She thought of Wickham with a reasonable distrust and yet with much pity.

'He never asked me a word about his mother,' she thought, 'and yet how hard he must have worked, how much he must have borne for them!'

But the first consideration just now was Katie. Mrs. Lennox good-naturedly took out her daughters for a walk, and left Katie either to walk with Florella, or to entertain her in the schoolroom for the afternoon. The opportunity was at hand, and before Florella could speak, Katie availed herself of it.

'I know what you're going to say. I know what you saw, what you think!'

And then she poured out her story. Yes, she adored him; they adored each other; they were engaged, as they had every right to be. Very likely it was wrong—she didn't mind if it was. She should like to do wrong for him. And love made everything right. It was above all stupid rules and conventionalities. At first she had been a child, with silly scruples; now she was a woman and knew. Love was above everything.

Katie's cheeks blazed and her eyes shone. She walked about the schoolroom clasping and unclasping her hands, and looking prettier than ever.

'If you love Mr. Wickham,' said Florella at the first pause, 'you should not help him to do a dishonourable thing.'

'Dishonourable! *Him!*' exclaimed Katie, with more passion than grammar.

'Yes. It's very dishonourable for him to meet you secretly—a girl with no parents, and put as you are in a position of trust.'

'He wouldn't speak to me in Rilston; he's very particular indeed!'

'If you love him,' said Florella, with great earnestness, 'you

can't wish that he should do wrong for your sake. You must wish him to be quite honourable and good.'

'I don't care a straw whether he's good or bad. He's him, and that's enough; so there!' cried Katie.

'I can't understand that,' said Florella, feeling that they spoke to each other across one of the great dividing lines of the world.

'Then I suppose you'd give up Mr. Waynflete if you thought he wasn't as good as you are? I call that mean,' said Katie; 'but I suppose cold, quiet people can do it.'

'No,' said Florella, 'I should never give him up. But I will—I would suffer anything rather than that he should do wrong to make it easy to marry me.'

Florella said a great deal more, representing how bad it would be for Mr. Wickham's position in the place if Mrs. Lennox found out what was going on, how all blame would be thrown on him, and real harm might be done to his prospects. She tried to make Katie think of herself as the tempter and not as the tempted; but as the girl calmed down a little, and, by way of defence, told her exactly what had passed, she felt very angry with the man who had safeguarded his own share of the business so carefully. Katie admitted doing wrong, but her conscience was swamped, and she was proud to feel that her misgivings had vanished.

'And are you going to tell of me?' she said petulantly.

'Not now,' said Florella; 'but I'm not going to say any more.' She sat silent. Arguments, she felt, were thrown away.

Katie threw herself into a low chair opposite. She pulled her handkerchief about in her hands, and stared out of her great blue eyes at the fire.

'I suppose I've done rather wrong,' she said. 'Yes, I have, I know. Of course I'm trusted. I suppose I've been—rather unladylike. But you don't know—even if I did go to college, I should never be very much. I never should like being a governess; I haven't got anybody. Oh, to have some one and a home! And I—cared for him—the first minute I saw him. And if I could get married——'

Florella held out her hands. 'Oh, Katie, it must be hard,' she said, her voice breaking. 'Nothing could be harder than that. Nothing of one's own is ever worse than other people's troubles; I hope he cares really; that he *is* good; that you *will* be married—I do indeed.'

Katie threw herself down and hid her face in the outstretched hands.

Florella felt that she had done little good. She could have forced Katie to give her almost any promise; she could have worked on Max's interest in her; she could have reported Wickham's entreaty to herself. She had struck the wrong note, and said stupid things. She had gained the strange perplexing knowledge of the difference between one human being and another. Katie was a strange soul.

'Oh, Katie,' she said, 'I love you. I want to help you. Do try to help Mr. Wickham to be perfectly honourable and quite trustworthy. Do—*do* try! Do resist the evil!'

(*To be continued.*)

FROM MY ATTIC WINDOW.

War and Women.

WHENEVER and wherever there is a great and bitter war, there is a woman at the bottom of the mischief, the cynics say. And perhaps they are right. For the newspapers, even in these days, do not tell the whole story. The real point of most stories—the things that really make history—are known only to the few. And undoubtedly history has been made by the women behind the scenes more than by public policies. Spain is a country which knows this. The greatest, cruelest, and most barbarous civil war of modern days, the civil war which began with Ferdinand VII.'s death in 1833, owed its outbreak and continuance to a woman. Then the Queen Regent Christina fought for the kingdom for her daughter Isabella, to whom the king had left it by will, in defiance of the Salic law. She fought for right, it is true, but she used unholy weapons. She inflamed men's passions that she might avail herself of their services. The Don Carlos of those days was a coward and runaway. Otherwise the struggle would have ended differently.

Whether there is a woman at the bottom of Spain's war of 1898 I don't know, but I do know that whenever and wherever there is war, it is the women who suffer most. Action is relief when the mind and feelings are tense. To be left with the stuff to look on is agony to those who watch. And when there are those in the fight who hold one's heart-strings, watching becomes torture. Of course, in big wars, where men are killed by the hundred, the public does think of the widows and the mothers and the sweethearts. But in small wars, where men die by ones and twos, who remembers them? 'Lieutenant Broom, of H.M.S. *Bangkok*, was unfortunately killed in a brush with the natives.' And he was somebody's only son, and the light of the mother's life went out with that paragraph. The public can only sympathise in the lump, by the thousand.

The Perfection of War-Nursing.

This promises to be a year of wars, and a year of women's sorrow. America is one of the few civilised countries in which the present generation of women has known war by actual experience at its own door. Then the time produced the women, I might say pre-eminently the woman, needed. Miss Clara Barton was born to do for America something of the work Miss Florence Nightingale did for us. And, curiously enough, both came to the front under somewhat similar circumstances. Both were women of wealth and culture, both came to their life-work at the psychical moment when the need was greatest. When the news of the first battle in the civil war came to Washington, Miss Clara Barton and a few friends started off to the heart of the strife. It was soon evident that Miss Barton had powers of organisation—that magnetic power which makes for leadership and an unexhaustible and unerring judgment. She travelled in the military trains to the very battle-field, and saw the principal fights on the spot. And the women all over the States nobly followed her example, not the less nobly that their duty lay in remaining in the cities. They started the registers of male and female nurses for work among the wounded, held bazaars to provide funds for the benefit of sick and wounded, and supplemented by huge amounts the Government grants.

Women provided Homes of Rest for soldiers on the march, and ladies, who had never before faced the realities of life, cheerfully worked for weeks in floating hospitals, crowded with typhus patients. The ingenious ways in which women of all ages, conditions, and ranks provided for the comfort and the health of those at the front is surprising, and the tale of their self-sacrifice fills a volume. Miss Clara Barton is still the president and the active head of the present Nursing Society, which has become a branch of the great Red Cross Society of the world. Women have volunteered for service as they did before. But, to-day, with an enormous staff of skilled nurses, ready to go to the front at a few hours' notice, experience to help them, and the latest scientific method and apparatus to take with them, there is no question that the States are in a position to make their nursing and hospital arrangements on a scale of perfection never before equalled in the wars of nations. It will be an object-lesson which, we hope, never need be copied in England.

Some Facts without a Cause.

Since the days when 'The Song of the Shirt' and 'The Cry of the Children' stirred the heart, and eventually the head of the nation, some things have undoubtedly altered, and altered for the better. It would be falsely pessimistic to doubt so much. But, in the last few years, some other things have altered, and altered for the worse. The *Pall Mall Gazette* says, 'The recollection of starvation wages grows faint; we are apt to think that something has been done, and that things are not so bad as they used to be, when, in fact, they are steadily growing worse.' And the things that are steadily growing worse are women's wages.

Now, I remember that the three degrees of lying are untruths, lying, and statistics! And therefore of statistics I have used none, only a few stray facts, taken from various sources. The *Morning Leader*, for example, mentions in an article that the women who make babies' shoes once could make 25*s.* a week. But now they cannot make half that.

In a most valuable paper in that excellent little quarterly, *The Englishwoman's Review*, Miss Jessie Boucherett makes a comparison between the facts given to Parliament in February, 1893, by the lady commissioners for women's work and the facts in the report of the Women's Industrial Council in 1897, which represent the present rate of wages. Of this I avail myself for quotation.

A shirt-maker at Woolwich gives evidence that she 'used to get 2*d.* for sewing buttons on a dozen shirts, and now gets 1*d.* for the same work.' A boot and shoe maker, who could make 25*s.* a week, can now only make from 10*s.* to 12*s.* a week. At artificial flower-making wages are about half what they were. A shop that used to pay 4*s.* for making a dozen pillow-cases, now pays 2*s.* And so the tale goes on; a tragic tale enough to the individual worker, though monotonous in the telling. But there are two exceptions to this list of falling wages. One is that, as a rule, skilled labour, for which training and technical knowledge are necessary, is paid at about the same rate as twenty or thirty years ago. The other exception is one we all know of by practical experience, the trade of domestic service, where wages have risen at least a third in the last thirty years.

* * * * * *

Some Causes without a Moral.

Now, as to the reasons for this fall in wages, which is such a serious thing for the women who earn the wages, and for us too who buy what they have spent their life-sweat in making. The first is, Miss Irwin—a

commissioner on that labour commission—considers, the demand for cheap inferior goods; the second, the unrestricted competition of employers to meet it, this being helped out by the unskilled nature of the work, and the necessitous and helpless condition of the workers. These are, unfortunately, economically natural conditions. They are in accordance with that inexorable law of supply and demand which works so cruelly for the individual.

But the third cause of depression brings one into the region of hot debate—the battle-field of two rival schools. It is an artificial cause—the continually increasing restrictions put upon women's work by well-meaning laws, framed by well-meaning legislators, urged by a well-meaning public. It sounds an excellent and beautiful thing to limit the number of hours during which a poor weak woman may work in a factory or a shop. And, indeed, in certain classes of trade, the textile factories to wit, it is a great boon, and has worked, since those splendid first Factory Acts, most beneficently. But, in reality, in other classes of trades, where the conditions are different, how do these restrictions work out?

Let me give the example quoted by Miss Boucherett. When it was suggested that bleach works should be subject to limitation of hours of work for women, the employers remonstrated and said that as their work depended on sun, rain, and wind, the hours were necessarily irregular, and that if women could not be allowed to work irregularly they would be obliged to dismiss them. The remonstrance was disregarded, with the result that five years after the men and boys working had increased by 8000, the women and girls had decreased by 653.

A similar case is now in the balance in the matter of women who cure fish. The fishing-boats do not come in according to a time-table. There are winds and waves which do not act according to the requisitions of the factory laws. The women are allowed to work overtime by the Factory Act in pickling and salting fish, but nothing is said about smoking. And the inspector comes down on the fold, otherwise the curing-shed, and finds women watching the fish being smoked one night. The employer is fined, and there is a possibility that through this or similar restrictions this trade may be taken out of the hands of women. Yet many earn good wages. The work is dirty, but light and healthy. This is but a sample of what this style of legislation may do and is doing. It will be awkward if

some enterprising Home Secretary ordain that nurses and house and parlour maids are to stop work at 6 p.m. with no option of overtime. In the mean time, would it not be well for enthusiastic supporters of legislation, for all trades and under all conditions, to turn the question over and look at the other side?

* * * * * *

Real Life Play arising from 'Enoch Arden.' How many plots there are going a-begging for novelists or play-writers to pick up! Here is an 'Enoch Arden' story from real life, which has copied fiction most faithfully, only with a Part II. of more highly coloured melodrama. The details have just come to light and been pieced together, but even now the conclusion is missing. It seems that during the Franco-German War, M. Binot, a grocer in Vincennes, was supposed by his wife to have been killed in one of the battles around the city. Previously his house had been shelled by the Prussians, and his wife and child, unknown to him, had escaped to another town. When the war was over Binot returned to his suburban home, and, seeing his old residence destroyed, arrived at the conclusion that his wife and child were killed and buried beneath the ruins. Drying his tears, he set to work again, made money, and re-married. Meanwhile, his wife heard of his return, but kept away from him, and brought up her son Gustave, who is now a married man, under the impression that his father had been killed in battle.

But the secret was, unfortunately, in the possession of a friend. With this friend Madame Binot had a dispute. The secret, needless to say, was made a weapon of revenge, and Madame Binot's son was told that his father was alive, and living at La Chapelle. Thither Binot *fils* repaired, and found Binot *père* dining in a restaurant with the other Madame Binot. The story has not progressed beyond this point. But in imagination I see a vast number of thrilling developments. In fact, were it not for my magnanimous disposition, I should not be offering this plot to a literary public.

* * * * * *

The Disease of Genius. Max Nordau once wrote a book to prove that genius is only a form of neurosis, very highly developed. And now a Frenchman, M. Arvède Barine, has applied the test to the lives of four neurotics of genius, and found that they prove the contention up to the hilt. He has examined the careers of

Hoffman, De Quincey, Poe, and Gérard de Nerval, with the object of determining the precise relations between their nervous maladies and their writings. The result is not enlivening. Three of the cases were drunkards, and the fourth utterly mad. All lived without principle, without joy or happiness, and all died horribly. Of De Quincey every one knows, though how much of his own confession is to be believed no one knows. He attributed his opium-drinking to the accident of a toothache. But the result was that he became a morally irresponsible person, unable to resist any evil incitement of his mind, at which in a healthy state his normal good sense would have at once revolted. His mind was rendered torpid, flabby, incapable of sustained effort, unable to finish a task begun. After his death hundreds of letters were found only half written. His judgment and imagination—and his imagination was the evidence of his genius—were entirely undermined.

Poe's drinking made him an inveterate liar, and at last absolutely incapable of knowing what was true and what false. His story of his trip to Paris, and his wonderful adventures there, is now known to have been pure romance. With the bottle in his hand he swore he never drank.

But even in the madness of genius the stability and solidity of our English character seems to preserve some sort of balance, for the other two whom M. Barine examines, Hoffman and Gérard de Nerval, were mad in a more wildly licentiate way than our compatriots. Hoffman was the most romantic of the Romantic Germany of 1800. But they even were too prudish for him. And he broke away to travel with a company of strolling-players in a van. They were the lowest of the low, upholding and practising every form of immorality and licentiousness. Hoffman drank immoderately, and held wine-bibbing for a virtue. He lived religiously on his own principles, which were, in fact, to have none, and died of slow paralysis. The last of this melancholy quartette was openly a lunatic. His best work was done in a madhouse. He professed seventeen religions at once, tramped all over Europe with no money and no change of garments, lived with the Druses, and tried to lead a live lobster round the Palais Royal with a blue ribbon. Eventually he hanged himself, and all romantic Paris was dissolved in tears. And this is genius?

ANNIE GROSER HURD.

THROUGH PINK GLASSES.

NOW that war is in the air, none need complain of a lack of literature suited to the occasion. Succeeding the heavy crop of books dealing with the rising in Mashonaland, the last Soudan campaign, and the Græco-Turkish war—a crop not yet fully exhausted—comes volume after volume describing the just concluded campaign on the Indian frontier. Mr. Churchill's 'Story of the Malakand Field Force,' and 'A Frontier Campaign,' by Lord Fincastle and Mr. Elliott-Lockhart, are early in the field. I notice also announcements of several other works dealing with the same subject. Personally, I have read none of them—partly because they have not happened to come my way, and partly because I consider that my patriotic ardour is sufficiently inflamed by reading the morning papers. Besides, with the best will in the world, one cannot read everything. I have never intended (perhaps it may be worth while to make the explanation) my few desultory remarks as a complete guide to the literature of the month. Such a view of my task would entail a feeling of responsibility, to which I am a happy stranger. I take the pick of those that come my way, and do not inquire too curiously about the rest.

* * * * *

For example, I suppose I ought to feel some shame at having failed to mention such a work as 'The School for Saints,' at the date of its first appearance, some time last year. I confess, without the least compunction, that I read that admirable book for the first time a few weeks ago, when the second edition came out. I am sorry that I shall never have the pleasure of reading it for the first time again—indeed, it is possible that I shall never see it again at all, for it has been lent to one of the slowest readers in Christendom—but I am partially consoled by hearing that Mrs. Craigie is at work upon a sequel. I say 'partially' because I fear that she will be unable to keep the rest of Mr. Orange's life-history up to the level of this first instalment.

Sequels are proverbially disappointing. But I do unhesitatingly declare, thus late in the day, that by the writing of 'The School for Saints' Mrs. Craigie has attained a position in the front rank of living English novelists, in the humble opinion of the present writer. The quality of her work recalls that of Mr. George Meredith.

* * * * * *

For those who do not care about tackling French books in the original Gallic, Mr. Frederic Lees has produced a translation of 'The Disaster,' by MM. Paul and Victor Margueritte. As a realistic picture of the Franco-German war, it takes rank with Zola's 'Débâcle,' but it makes somewhat cheerfuller reading than that terrible masterpiece. The Marguerittes take for their hero a brilliant young officer on the general staff, and concern themselves with the story of Marshal Bazaine and the unfortunate army of the Rhine. Their hero is at the centre; he can think for himself, and foresees almost from the first the impending catastrophe; whereas Zola's chief actor was a mere pawn in the game—a private soldier moving blindly in a dim tragedy. 'The Disaster' contains some of the best descriptions of modern warfare ever written: as a whole, the book is perhaps rather spoiled by the introduction of a flimsy love-interest, which seems out of place amidst the grim realities of the war. Primarily, I believe, the book was intended as a character sketch of Bazaine —a man whose character remains an insoluble enigma to the present day.

* * * * * *

The Marguerittes, I see, intend to make this volume the first of a trilogy. The subject of the war was found to be too vast for a single book. Although cast in the form of a novel, with most of the prominent characters drawn from imagination, 'The Disaster' has been compiled with all the research and care necessary to a work of history. The authors are sons of that General Margueritte who commanded the cavalry and fell, I believe, at Sedan. The younger brother has himself served in the army, which is some sort of guarantee for accuracy in military details. The book is sad, of course. The picture of the flower of the French army, stagnating in the midst of rain, and mud, and disease at Metz, and waiting in vain for the order to break through the encircling lines of the enemy; still hoping against hope, until stunned by the incredible news of the capitulation—it could not well be painted in rose colour. But

there is no note of pessimism about the treatment. The book thoroughly deserves to be read, although it is impossible to give much praise to the literary grace of the translation.

* * * * * *

As a general rule, I have no great liking for books of reminiscences. The throwing together of random recollections in an incondite heap, and printing the same in two volumes is, no doubt, an easy way enough of making a book. But there are singularly few people who can be trusted to produce anything worth reading in this manner. Commonly they seem to imagine that personal reminiscences should consist of nothing but funny anecdotes concerning men and women whom they have met. Since life is not spent (in most cases) entirely on humorous lines, it follows that a good many of these stories have to be retailed from hearsay. Owing, too, to the large and increasing output of books of this class, it follows that many of their brightest gems are not altogether new. Diligent students of this reminiscent literature—and there are many such, for the taste for it is a prevalent and growing disease—must often feel oppressed with a vague discontent. 'I seem to have seen it all before,' you may have heard one say, 'but I don't remember having ordered it from the library.'

* * * * * *

The State should prohibit the publication of 'Random Recollections,' 'Leaves from a Long Life,' and other similarly named works, unless the author has proved himself the possessor of a strong and original mind. Then books like 'Auld Lang Syne,' by Professor Max Müller, would stand less chance of being overwhelmed by the mass of worthless publications masquerading under names of the same kind. His book is one of the few books of reminiscences which I should be sorry to have missed; it is also one of the few in which the writer keeps himself in the background, and concerns himself with painting, with a few telling touches, his friends and those whom he has chanced to meet during a more than commonly interesting career. Indeed, Professor Max Müller seems to have been intimate with almost every personality of importance in Europe. There is scarcely a well-known name in modern literature unmentioned in his pages. In music, too, the Professor was an amateur of no inconsiderable skill: he has played with Mendelssohn, and been on terms of friendship with Liszt and Schumann. Such opportunities have seldom been

given to the ordinary writer of reminiscences; if they had been, it is safe to assume that he would not have written a book with one-tenth of the interest to be found in 'Auld Lang Syne.'

* * * * * *

I have just read Mr. Grant Allen's latest book, 'The Incidental Bishop.' It is in Mr. Allen's lightest vein, but there is a touch of pathos about the story. Beginning with a farcical air, it comes near to turning out a tragedy. The idea of irresistible circumstance compelling a common sailor to assume the clothes, and with them the personality, of a dead missionary has certainly a suggestion of comedy about it; but Mr. Allen refuses to avail himself of its comic opportunities. The sailor-missionary takes it that it is his business to do his best in his new sphere, and he becomes an ecclesiastic of ecclesiastics. In fact, so well does he succeed, that he is made Bishop of Dorchester—the little Dorchester on the Thames, as the author is careful to explain, and not the capital of Dorsetshire. In Saxon times the Oxfordshire town was the see of a bishopric, founded by St. Birinus, and Mr. Allen's bishop is fond of expatiating on its ancient glories to chance visitors. Tom Pringle (who, as the Rev. Cecil Glisson, is appointed to this pleasant post) is a good fellow, and the reader grows to sympathise with him in his dread of the apparently inevitable exposure. The opening scene of the book is striking, and the interest never flags. On the whole an eminently readable novel. I do not quite see the force of the adjective 'incidental,' but it makes a sufficiently provocative title. Presumably 'The Incidental Bishop' was not intended as one of Mr. Grant Allen's serious efforts.

* * * * * *

If you have a tendency to the frankly frivolous, it is possible that you may like to read 'Van Wagener's Ways,' by W. L. Alden. The eccentric professor, with whom you have perhaps already a bowing acquaintance, has a genius for inventing novel applications of science which makes him the terror of New Berlinopolisville. 'The Amphibious Torpedo' and 'A Scientific Trap' (intended solely for the use of burglars) are the most amusing of Mr. Alden's budget, which, like one of his former books, is 'told by the Colonel.'

E. H. Lacon Watson.

The China Cupboard.

ARRANGED BY CHELSEA CHINA.

(*For the regulations of all 'Monthly Packet' Competitions, see p.* 716.)

FIRST SHELF.

VARIETY SUBJECT.

Chelsea China feels that she has set rather a difficult question, for tastes sometimes vary with age and circumstances, and the sort of place we like in one decade is not always the sort of place we like in another. Solitary folk want the opportunity of little social pleasures, and large families can make their own amusements anywhere. Natural beauty makes much more difference in the happiness of some people than in that of others; and the 'sweet custom of living together,' in one little world, is more for many of us than all the charm of novelty or even the immense sense of freedom and absence of friction which comes from suiting one's organism to its environment.

Chelsea China thinks that to have lived for a part of youth in some one place in the country gives a kind of knowledge both of our mother earth and of the real life of our fellow creatures which can hardly be otherwise obtained. It is not exactly knowledge of little natural facts that is meant, for these can often be obtained by observant people in a shorter time than it is the fashion to suppose; but it is a sort of knowing the roots of the world as we know our own kith and kin, which, at any rate, for women of the wealthier classes, is very difficult to get in a large town. On the other hand, there is a quite new delight in finding ourselves, perhaps for the first time, in the exact place which suits our own inmost being, whatever that may demand from us. On the whole, *Skena Vaw* has sent the most spirited and interesting paper, and receives the prize. *Miranda*, *Lag-last*, and *E. V. B.* have sent very good papers. Some of the writers have spent too much time on the places they would *not* like to live in. *Grisly Griselt* sends a pretty paper.

THE SORT OF PLACE I WOULD LIKE TO LIVE IN, AND WHY.

Most of us, at one time or another, have been guilty of thinking that if only our circumstances had been different we could have done so much more with our lives, and made them of so much greater value to ourselves and others. If we live in the country, we have longed for the intellectual advantages of a large town, with its openings for work; if we live in a city, we have sighed for the fresh air of the country, with its quiet and freedom. For once we can air our grievances in this direction with a clear conscience, for Chelsea China has invited us to give our views upon the place we would like to live in. Will any of us describe our present dwelling-place? I fear not. This discontented daughter, at any rate, declares at once in favour of a place like Edinburgh. Why? Because there is so much to see and to

feel, to learn and to love; and seeing, feeling, learning, and loving are four mighty helps to a full and happy life.

What is there to see? Places of historical interest, places made memorable for ever by the events which have occurred in them, places of beauty too, both of sea and land; nay, wherever we turn, there is something to see that attracts our attention.

As to feeling, what of the associations hanging round Holyrood, St. Giles', and the great castle itself? The stern spirit of the Covenanters, the witchery of the unfortunate queen, the sturdy spirit of Jenny Geddes, are felt more deeply from personal acquaintance with the places where their memories cling, than from all the histories we have ever read. Our hearts burn, our blood flows more quickly as the past confronts us, and we realise the heritage of fair and noble deeds that has come down to us, and if a sterner, harsher note sounds also from those half-forgotten days, it is followed by a voice of hope. What is there to feel, do I ask? Nay, in such a place we can at first do naught but feel. Criticism and minute inspection have as yet no place. We are taken captive by the enchantment that belongs to the past.

And what is there to learn? History, perhaps, claims our first attention when the early stage of pure feeling is passing away. We must know the truth about the scenes that have taken place in this wonderful city. We must try to understand something of the national character that has been able to produce such a city. Then we climb Arthur's Seat—that strange mass of basalt, telling of subterranean fires and forces, followed through countless centuries by the slow work of denudation. So we look out our geological text-books and maps, and find problems of deep interest all around. And while we are trying to read these not very plain tales from the hills, we find some flower that we have never seen before. Our curiosity is excited, and we puzzle out the mysteries of a flower until we find its name, or we go to the Botanical Gardens, where all that is wonderful in the floral world is spread before our eyes. But we like our rambles best, so we climb the Pentlands, get our feet wet in exploring boggy ground, and return laden with treasures. If books be our delight, there never was such a place for study, and the poor student is always taken into consideration.

Last of all, what is there to love? This question hardly needs an answer, for when we have really seen a place, and felt its charm, and learned its history, love for it follows naturally; and if we love a place, whether it be built by human hands or carved by Nature herself, we must be influenced by it. And such an influence has one great and abiding power. It is always the same. We may change; it never will.

There must be many places where there is more to see, to feel, to learn, and to love than one life can possibly find room for. Edinburgh is only a type, but I have chosen it because it seems best to fulfil my idea of the place I would like to live in.

A Haunt of Peace.

On the borders of Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire lies the little corner of England which I love. It is in the very heart of the country, so still that it seems sometimes as though no noise of the outer world reached it, and when night closes in you almost *hear* the silence. All the villages about are more or less picturesque, but ours, I think, is the prettiest of all; rather long and straggling, with a pond at one end, and a few yards off the stumpy little church, which is not, however, devoid of interest, for its corbel-table figures in books of architecture, and its churchyard finds a place in one of Wordsworth's sonnets. From this point the road rises, and you toil up a steep ascent till you reach the house of my choice—long and low and solid-looking, built of stone, with thick mullions to the window. In spring, snowy blossoms embower its grey walls; and when the hot July days come,

apricots, as golden as the fruit in the garden of the Hesperides, gleam against them. A little further on stands the old manor-house, and lying in bed on an April morning, I have often listened to the 'building rook' cawing 'from the windy tall elm-trees' which surround it.

All the outlying country is full of charm and variety; there is the park close to us, with its covers, where we hunt for the first cowslips; its stream, whose shallow banks are gay with marsh-marigolds; and within a walk are woods, full of spreading beeches, which would have gladdened the heart of Virgil, where the ground is literally starred with primroses and blue with wild hyacinths. I have seen the place at many different seasons, but to my mind it is the most beautiful in the sweet spring weather, in that lovely, changeable, fickle month which is now with us. Most truly can I echo the words—

'April, my April,
Ever fresh and dear;
Sweet sixteen amid the months,
Darling of the year!'

But my village has other advantages. It lies in the midst of a district which opens out a field of inexhaustible interest to the antiquarian and the student of ecclesiastical architecture, and is within easy reach of Oxford, so that lectures and concerts are attainable. Moreover, as is obvious from what has been said, it is not far from London; and thus, even for a person of small means, a run to town once or twice a year is quite possible, a very important consideration in the choice of a locality. No part of England *really* possesses the same fascination for me as the Lake Country; but as to living there, think what a journey thence to London implies! For I own it, I am a 'child of the great city,' and much as I love the fields and woods, and dear as are all the country sights and sounds to me, I could not live all the year away from the life and stir—the din if you will—of London; though I cannot go so far as to say, with Private Ortheris, that I regret her smells!—MIRANDA.

PRIZE WINNER FOR APRIL.

Miss Bradshaw, Burnhead, Retford.

SUBJECT FOR JUNE.

'The struggle and not the attainment measures the character.'—Apply this saying to the life of some 'hero of failure' in history or fiction.

SECOND SHELF.

PROSE COMPETITION FOR APRIL.

Fellow Travellers.

The papers sent in present a good deal of variety, ranging from life-stories in miniature to almost scientific classifications. Some are amusing, some pathetic; while, in more than one instance, Chelsea China regrets to observe the instinct of the true-born Briton peeping out: 'Stranger—'eave 'arf a brick at him!' The writers dwell more on the inconveniences of having fellow travellers than on the good we can get out of them. Many of

the papers mention (and always as the characteristic of a lower class) the fondness for taking strangers into confidence; but though admitting the unsuitability of 'unveiling before the gaze of an imperfect sympathy,' we cannot deny that there may sometimes be a pleasure or a comfort, even to a refined nature, in showing a new side of itself on occasions where there is no bond of old acquaintance to commit one to a given attitude of mind. In discussing all kinds of questions with 'perfect strangers,' we may get new lights on our own characters which may sometimes astonish us, and which may be quite as useful to us as the undoubted gain of the sympathetic study of those of other people.

Sea-Maiden takes the prize with a clearly expressed paper, giving a good general point of view. We also print *Thorshaven's* amusing 'types.'

CLASS LIST FOR APRIL.

PRIZE.—Miss S. G. Newstead, 9, York Place, Clifton, Bristol.

DISTINCTION.—*Thorshaven.*

CLASS I.

E. V. B., Miranda, Winifred Spurling, Nora, Holly Leaf, Daughter of the Soil.

CLASS II.

Barbara Allen, Alicks, Einsam, Carlotta, Trilby.

CLASS III.

L. M. Oldfield, M. E., Lindum, Lag-last, Toad-in-a-Hole, Polly.

FELLOW TRAVELLERS.

To 'know them' is a liberal education.

Without them, their habits, customs, and manners, courteous and discourteous, any journey longer than the hour or so which one's eyes permit to be spent in steady reading would become inexpressibly tedious.

For even the truest country-lovers cannot enjoy much of the scenery through which the train whirls them too rapidly for more than a tantalising glimpse.

How much one learns from them, especially in a third-class carriage! In a comfortable, well-padded 'first' we are apt to exchange comparative bodily ease for mental tedium, cushions for characteristics. Its occupants are usually of the class which does *not* discuss its most intimate concerns with, or in the hearing of, total strangers, nor leave all its tenderest farewell messages to be said at the door of the railway carriage.

We are certainly spared the harrowing details of a friend's last illness or marvellous recovery which 'ladies' of the third-class delight to give to any or every listener; but, on the other hand, we may miss many interesting conversations. I once travelled south with two master mariners, who discovered their common calling, and whose talk thenceforward was like a living page of 'Captains Courageous'—a real salt savour—which gave me more of an insight into their conditions of life than I had ever before obtained at first hand.

To a woman, I think fellow travellers often give a comforting reassurance as to the survival of chivalry even in these matter-of-fact days. Of course many specimens of the 'bounder' tribe 'bound' at their discretion in our public conveyances, for fellow travellers in an omnibus are to the full as instructive as those on the railway. But, on the whole, I think gentlewomen in the true sense of the word will receive unexpected and most welcome little acts of courtesy from very unlikely companions of the road.

And from both sexes, and all ranks, kindly help to a fellow-traveller in need of almost any sort seems to flourish more under these circumstances than any other, given the usual slight degree of acquaintance. I do not know whether the gratitude shown for some trifling service, such as taking care of a fretful baby to relieve its worn-out mother, or the kindness shown almost invariably by one woman on a journey to another, are more cheering traits in that most maligned, but at bottom kindly, human nature of ours. And how many of those women who *never* seem able to understand the simplest parts of 'Bradshaw's' arrangements, and get hopelessly muddled over 'changes,' luggage, etc., have found a 'very parfait, gentil knyghte' in some prosaic man in an ulster and travelling cap?

Space forbids any further enlargement on the various types of fellow travellers to be met with on any journey, and on the passing friendships formed 'for this occasion only' with people we shall probably never meet again; but any thinking person must admit that the conditions of our travels, whether the short ones of everyday life, or the long life-journey on which we embark at our birth, and only end with our last breath, are largely influenced for weal or woe by our fellow travellers.—SEA-MAIDEN.

FELLOW TRAVELLERS.

Fellow travellers! The subject is a wide one. I give some frequently recurring types.

Every one knows the *energetic* F. T.

'My dear, I'm so glad! I have just found out that if we start at 4 a.m. (never mind breakfast, we can take rolls in our pockets), we can reach Anelante in time to hurry to the top of the Campanile, and have a bird's-eye view of the town before catching our train to the south.'

The *fidgety* F. T. has been immortalised by *Punch*.

'But are you *sure* this is the right train?' 'Well, I've asked six porters, two guards, and the station master, and they all say the same thing, so I *think* we must be right.'

The *infallible* F. T. is ready at a moment's notice to give you the population of Perugia, the latest day on which you may join the caravan starting for Timbuctoo, or the name of local plant or fossil he has never seen before.

It is undesirable to have more than one such present when information is required.

To the *geological* F. T. no one objects save the porters, who, towards the close of the tour, stagger under his boxes. As it has been pointed out, 'It is quite respectable to break stones with a *small* hammer.'

The *botanical* F. T. is also harmless, and can, when the rain descends hopelessly and Tauchnitzes are exhausted, spend a happy morning over 'some weeds in a wine-glass.'

Of *artistic* F. T.'s there are many types; not the least uncommon, perhaps, the amateur who rushes in where artists fear to tread, though the damsel found by Hamerton (?) on the top of St. Peter's sketching the whole city of Rome on a loose sheet of paper held in her hand was, we think, an extreme specimen.

The *uncultured* F. T. of frankly uttered opinions is sometimes refreshing.

Scene, Cairo. Polite traveller, unable to give the admiration demanded for a garishly decorated building, remarks evasively, 'One of the newly built mosques, I think?'

Colonial damsel, with enthusiasm: 'Yes, that is the beauty of it! We *are* so tired of these old things!'

Then there are *dissatisfied* F. T.'s. That these should be so numerous often fills one with amazement.

St. Peter's is smaller, St. Mark's much less entrancing than they

'expected,' and after the vision of its mighty waters and quivering rainbows, we are calmly told, 'Nearly every one is disappointed in Niagara, you know!'

Calverley has given us the *cheerful* F. T., who—

'Should he leave his pocket-compass,
Or Murray, or thick boots behind,
Will raise no rumpus,
But plod serenely on.'

And who has not known and been grateful to the *helpful* F. T.? She who is not only ready with never-failing sympathy, and apparently never-failing stores, but is quick to *perceive* the need of them; who will sit up with any sudden case of illness, and seeks out the lonely and the sorrowful in their solitude in the crowded hotel.

As *she* comes instinctively from the pen in writing of the helpful F. T., I must not omit the *chivalrous* F. T. *He* is perhaps less quick in taking action than she, is somewhat rarer, has a finer courtesy, and (may I say it?) seems to excite a deeper gratitude.—THORSHAVEN.

WHO, WHEN, AND WHERE?

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR APRIL.

(Seasonable similes from old poets.)

1. Say what (*a*) the 'spring of love resembleth,' and (*b*) what men are like when they woo, and what when they wed.

2. 'Whan that —— with his showres sote
The droughte of March hath perced to the rote.'

Fill in the blank, and say where the lines are to be found.

3. 'Tell me, good Hobbinoll, what garres thee greete?
. . . . .
Like —— shoure so stremes the trickling teares
Adowne thy cheeke, to quenche thy thristye payne.'

Where is this quotation?

4. '—— the sweet ——, is the year's pleasant king;
Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring;
Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing,
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pe-we, to-witta-woo.'

From what song is this verse taken?

5. 'Now the golden morn aloft
Waves her dew-bespangled wing;
With vermeil cheek and whisper soft
She woes the tardy ——
Till —— starts.'

What well-known poem begins thus?

6. Find another quotation that suits well with the above set.

ANSWERS TO APRIL QUESTIONS.

(Subject—Spring or April.)

1. (*a*) 'Oh! how this Spring of love resembleth
The uncertain glory of an April day;
Which now shews all the beauty of the sun,
And by-and-by a cloud takes all away!'

(SHAKSPERE, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, i. 3.)

(*b*) 'Men are April when they woo, December when they wed.'
(*As You Like It*, iv. 1.)

2. 'Whan that Aprile,' etc.
(CHAUCER, 'Canterbury Tales,' prologue, ll. 1, 2.)

3. 'Like *April* shoure,' etc.
In SPENSER'S 'Shephearde's Calendar,' April.

4. '*Spring*, the sweet *Spring*,' etc.
From 'A Song of Spring,' by THOMAS NASH.

5. 'She wooes the tardy *Spring*
Till *April* starts.'
(Ode on the 'Pleasures arising from Vicissitude,' by THOMAS GRAY.)

6. Chelsea China is again grateful for some charming passages, most of which are well-chosen. It has not, however, occurred to all the competitors that a passage, to suit well with those given, should have been somewhat of the same date and style, and therefore not chosen from such a modern poet as Browning, for example. 'Spring' or 'April' should have been the chief point in the lines, and not only introduced as a passing allusion. The quotations oftenest given have been SHAKSPERE'S 'It was a lover and his lass,' and

'In the Spring,
When proud-pied April, dress'd in all his trim,
Hath put a spirit of youth in everything'

(from Sonnet 98), and lines from the EARL OF SURREY'S beautiful sonnet on Spring. These lines from JOHN FLETCHER'S 'Queen of Corinth' are pretty and appropriate—

'An April day,
In which the sun and west wind play together,
Striving to catch and drink the balmy drops.'

And so are those from his brother, GILES FLETCHER—

'The engladdened Spring,
Forgetful now to weep,
Began to emblazon from her leafy bed;
The waking swallow broke her half-year's sleep,
And every bush lay deeply purpured
With violets.'

MARKS FOR APRIL.

60: *A. C. R.*, *Aspley Guise*, *Athena*, *Blue Wings*, *Bog-Myrtle*, *Dianora*, *Double-Dummy*, *Ἐγκράτεια*, *E. V. B.*, *Gruffanuff*, *Helen*, *Iona*, *Isabel*, *L. J. H.*, *Malaprop*, *Melton Mowbray*, *Nevil*, *Otter*, *Sea-Maiden*, *Sophonisba*, *Swallow*, *Thorshaven*, *White Cat*, *W. Adey*, *W. Spurling*. 58: *Bice*, *Cymraes*, *Holly-Leaf*, *Irnham*, *M. R. A.*, *Scott*, *S. Millard*, *Syndicate*. 57: *All-Fours*, *Ellen Vannin*, *F. R. D.*, *Hay*, *The Blue Cat*. 55: *E. T.*, *Proserphina*. 50: *A. E. L.*, *Eleanor*, *Findhorn*, *Lenore*. 48: *Trimmer*. 40: *R. V. H.* 35: *L. M. Oldfield*. 30: *Cobwebs*.

Fourteen Streams is credited with 60 marks for March.
Gruffanuff.—Excuse allowed this time!
Kittiwake omitted to write 'Search Questions' on her envelope.
Peter sent answers to the wrong address.
The Editors apologise for the shock given to many competitors by the apparent change of date. It was only a misprint; a real change would have been more carefully notified.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR JUNE.

A Group.

'Open your gates, ye everlasting Piles,
Types of the Church which God hath reared
. . . . .
To rouse the heart and lead the will
By a bright ladder to the world above.'

(*Give the source of the above.*)

1. 'Thou, of temples old or temples new,
Standest alone—with nothing like to thee—
. . . Majesty,
Power, Glory, Strength, and Beauty, all are circled
In this eternal arc of worship undefiled.'

2. 'A dim twilight, to which the eye must be accustomed for some moments before the form of the building can be traced; and then there opens before us a vast cave, hewn out into the form of a cross, and divided into shadowy aisles by many pillars. Round the domes of its roof the light enters only through narrow apertures like large stars; and here and there a ray or two from some far-away casement wanders into the darkness and casts a narrow phosphoric stream upon the waves of marble that heave and fall in a thousand colours along the floor.'

3. 'O the chanting quires,
The giant windows' blazoned fires,
The height, the space, the bloom, the glory!
A mount of marble, a hundred spires!'

4. 'Here, where the end of earthly things
Lays heroes, patriots, bards, and kings;
. . . . .
Here, where the fretted aisles prolong
The distant notes of holy song.
. . . . .
If ever from an English heart,
Oh, here let prejudice depart!'

5. 'From every schires ende
Of Engelande, to —— they wende.'

Identify all the above, give the author's name, and source of the quotation.

6. Give a quotation (preferably in prose) in which a natural object is compared with the subject of the above questions.

NOTICE.—Answers (to SEARCH QUESTIONS only) to be sent by the 25th of each month to *Miss Pridham, Westmoreland Lodge, Wimbledon Park, Wimbledon.* 'Search Questions' to be written outside the envelope. All other competitions as usual.

THIRD SHELF.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

QUERIES.

Miss Duberley would like to know what is the plant spoken of as 'winter heath' in Esmè Stuart's book 'Harum-Scarum.'

Will any reader of the 'Monthly Packet' kindly lend Mount's 'Tales of Mission Work' (now out of print) to Miss Daniell, Little Berkhamstead House, Hertford? It shall be returned in a few days, and postage paid.

ANSWERS.

'If St. Paul be bright and clear,
It doth betide a happy year;
If on St. Paul there's snow or rain,
Dear will be all kinds of grain;
But if on St. Paul there's wind aloft,
War will take the nation off.'

These lines were told to *Miss Davenport* by the old sexton of Stratford-on-Avon Church, about fifty years ago.

E. Hinton.—Here is the complete poem by ARCHBISHOP R. C. TRENCH—

RETRIBUTION.

'Oh! righteous doom, that they who make
Pleasure their only end,
Ordering their whole life for its sake,
Miss that whereto they tend.

'While they who bid stern duty lead,
Content to follow, they,
Of duty only taking heed,
Find pleasure by the way.'

A. WALTER and others.

Bath Robin gratefully thanks the numerous readers of the 'Monthly Packet' who so kindly sent her Rudyard Kipling's Recessional Hymn.

L. M. E.—The marriage of Miss Beamston's heroine was of course perfectly legal, being in accordance with the law of the State in which it took place. It was in every respect a 'regular marriage,' justified by the emergency. Personally, we ourselves should much have preferred a marriage which received the blessing of a priest of our own Church.—CHELSEA CHINA.

Thorshaven.—Yes. Chelsea China has read Paul Bourget's delightful description.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Re LADY CANVASSERS.

DEAR CHELSEA CHINA,—I do not think the views of the gazer from your Attic Window ought to pass without a protest.

They rather remind me of a game said to be played by very naughty children, who fill paper bags with cold water and throw them down to burst on the heads of busy toilers passing below.

To begin with, your Attic dweller seems quite ignorant of the fact that for the London County Council, and for the various small local elections, a very large proportion of the voters are women; and women, moreover, who in many cases will tell you themselves that 'they don't know nothing about it;' or, at best, will give some such reason as that they are going to vote for the Moderates, because St. Paul said, 'Let your moderation be known unto all men'! I am no advocate for female suffrage, but if votes are possessed, the use of them becomes a duty. These voters want really education about their responsibilities.

To quote such a story as that of Sir Algernon West, in what purports to be a serious paper, is really casting an insult at many high-minded, religious women, who know, as possibly your Attic dweller does *not* know, how these smaller local elections affect the moral and religious welfare of the poor among whom they work, and who undertake canvassing as a duty from the highest motives, and in many cases with the cordial approval of the clergy.

The ins and outs of local elections are as impossible to explain to an outsider as it is to show the difficulties in the question of Irish Home Rule to the average Englishman. Sometimes the election is simply a question of

choice between more or less suitable persons; sometimes, again, there is a deliberate combined force attacking Church and morality to be faced.

I fear I am trespassing far on your space, but I think your readers may like to know a little more of the realities of a canvasser's work, and hope you will let me describe it. I believe the ordinary way of managing a proper canvass is as follows:—

One person goes round and leaves papers with information on the questions at issue; her duty is simply to satisfy herself that the voter is still at the address given, and to leave her packet.

A few days afterwards the canvasser proper calls. Of course there are canvassers and canvassers; but, to my mind, the ideal one is a well-read calm-minded woman, *not* an enthusiast, but with patience enough to deal quietly with the crass ignorance that is continually met with, and common sense enough to respect opposing views.

The canvassers' duties are to interview the voters or their wives (it is generally the latter), and enter them in her book as 'opponents,' 'doubtful,' or 'promises.' An opponent who evidently understands the matter and votes from conviction is left at once with a cheery farewell. The 'doubters are reasoned with, and the more conscientious ones are noted as candidates, cases to be accorded an interview with one of the candidates themselves. 'Promises' have to be kept up to voting pitch, as there is great laziness about going to the poll, and carriages have to be arranged for to take the aged and infirm. Besides the lady canvasser, there is often a gentleman who calls late, to see the men voters after working hours.

So much for the business part of the affair; but there is another side which the ideal canvasser will never forget. Many a door is gladly opened to the lady canvasser which would be slammed in the face of the district visitor, and she will have many unexpected calls on her sympathy, such as 'Dear baby died yesterday,' or 'My missus' just been took to the hospital.'

Without overstepping her welcome, or making herself a preaching nuisance, the ideal canvasser will try and surround her visit with a halo of kindness and light, which will last as a memory. I have heard that poor women in the East End considered the County Council Election as having been as good as a party, they so much enjoyed seeing the ladies.—I remain, yours truly, ROMAN LAUREL.

SIR CHARLES GRANDISON.

MADAM,—May I entreat you to insert a letter which is positively wrung from me by a misquotation in your February article on 'Sir Charles Grandison.' I cannot but think that the writer of that paper has never really read through what Mrs. Beecher-Stowe well called 'that trailing, tedious, delightful, seven-volumed old bore, Sir Charles Grandison;' she misses too many points in the book, and misunderstands the Lady Clementina difficulty, in a way which suggests the modern abridgment. However, the point I wish to notice is this: Lady G——, Sir Charles' youngest sister, having had a disastrous early love-affair, has married, with only half a heart, a worthy man, decidedly her inferior in intellect, and absolutely devoted to her. This naturally brings out all the hard side of her nature; she cannot be touched by his honest, simple devotion, and is a whimsical, capricious, tormenting wife; more than once on the verge of real danger and causing all her friends great anxiety, besides making her husband very uncomfortable. The approach of motherhood intensifies all this state of things, but when the baby arrives, wifeliness and motherhood come together to her in a rush, and the hard side of her melts in the tenderness of a really good heart. Nevertheless, she fights still with the wilfulness of a spoilt child against letting her husband see the extent of the change, till one day he, fortunately for himself, finds her and the baby alone